FOREIGN
BROADCAST
INFORMATION
SERVICE

Daily Report

Central Eurasia

ATTENTION!! ATTENTION!! ATTENTION!!

FBIS will phase out publication of most of its paper reports, including ALL Daily Reports and most FBIS Reports, by 31 December 1996.

See inside for information on how to access FBIS products and services electronically.

FBIS-SOV-96-028
Friday
9 February 1996

January 1996

Dear Customer:

Responding to our many customers' requests, NTIS will be offering FBIS publications electronically. Due to resource limitations, hardcopy production of FBIS publications will be phased out during 1996. We will notify our customers well in advance of the expiration date for each of our publications. Please see below regarding electronic access to products.

Our goal is to cease publication of all reports by 31 December 1996, except for S&T PERSPECTIVES, S&T CENTRAL EURASIA, S&T CHINA, S&T KOREA, S&T EUROPE, and S&T JAPAN. The S&T reports will continue to be published as hardcopy until the graphics they contain can be disseminated on-line.

FBIS products are offered electronically through the National Technical Information Service's (NTIS) "World News Connection" (WNC). This is a new on-line subscription service accessible through the World Wide Web. The Web address is http://wnc.fedworld.gov. Please see next page for a subscription form or call NTIS Fax Direct at 703-487-4140 and enter product code 8645 to receive more information.

World News Connection - WNC1..**$ 21**
7 Day - Introductory Offer
Unlimited interactive searching
[no profiles]
Order number SUB-9856BDQ

World News Connection - WNC2..**$ 50**
Monthly
Unlimited interactive searching
[no profiles]
Order number PB95-985700BDQ

World News Connection - WNC3..**$ 75**
Monthly
Unlimited interactive searching
[1 profile]
Order number PB95-985800BDQ

World News Connection - WNC4..**$100**
Monthly
Unlimited interactive searching
[up to 5 profiles]
Order number PB95-985900BDQ
(Prices are subject to change)

World News Connection™

A Foreign News Alert Service
from
the U.S. Government

User Name *(Please Print or Type)*	**Internet E-mail Address** *(Required)*	**Order Number**	**Price**
1) ____________	____________	____________	____________
2) ____________	____________	____________	____________

(Continue on a blank sheet if more space is required)

Deposit Account Number (for NTIS account customers only): ____________

Customer Master Number (if known): ____________ Date: ____________

Contact Name: ____________ Organization: ____________

Street Address: ____________ City: ____________ State: ____________ Zip: ____________

Province/Territory: ____________ Country: ____________

Foreign Postal Code: ____________

Internet E-mail Address (Organization contact person): ____________

Telephone Number: (   ) ____________ Fax Number: (   ) ____________

Credit Card Number: ____________

Credit Card Expiration Date: ____________

Card Type (Visa, Master Card, or American Express): ____________

Cardholder's Name (as printed on the credit card): ____________

Cardholder's Signature (required to validate all orders): ____________

(Please fax this form back to NTIS at **703-321-8547**. Fax service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
To verify receipt of your fax, call (703) 487-4679 between 7:00am - 5:00pm, Monday - Friday, Eastern Time.)

Daily Report
Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-96-028 CONTENTS *9 February 1996*

NOTICE: An * indicates material not previously disseminated in electronic form.

CHECHEN AFFAIRS

Terrorist Activity

Russia: Groznyy Protestors Refuse To Negotiate To End Rally *[INTERFAX]* 1
Russia: Security Forces Pull Back From Groznyy Rally *[ITAR-TASS]* 1
Russia: Police Order End to Pro-Dudayev Rally in Groznyy *[ITAR-TASS]* 1
Russia: Groznyy: Snipers Seen at Presidential Palace *[Moscow Radio]* 1
Russia: Additional OMON Units Being Moved to Rally Vicinity *[ITAR-TASS]* 2
Russia: Commander: Troops Not Interfering in Groznyy Rally *[ITAR-TASS]* 2
Russia: Chechen Government Says Groznyy Rally To End 9 Feb *[ITAR-TASS]* 2
Russia: Shots Fired To Disperse New Demonstrators in Groznyy *[ITAR-TASS]* 2
Russia: Two Explosions at Chechen Rally; Some Injured *[ITAR-TASS]* 3
Russia: Three Killed in Explosion at Chechen Rally *[ITAR-TASS]* 3
Russia: Details of Explosion at Groznyy Rally Given *[INTERFAX]* 3
Russia: Rally Explosion Feared To Be Chechen Provocation *[ITAR-TASS]* 3
Russia: Groznyy Police Say Rally Explosion Killed Two *[ITAR-TASS]* 4

Military Activity

Russia: Chechen Field Commanders Banned From Government Contact *[ITAR-TASS]* 4
Russia: Supplies for Troops in Chechnya Exceed Budget *[INTERFAX]* 4
Russia: Chechen Experience Leads to Weapons Modifications *[INTERFAX]* 5
Russia: Source of Dudayev's Arms Supply Reviewed *[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY Feb]* 5

Political Reaction

Russia: Chernomyrdin: Chechnya Conflict Will End Peacefully *[ITAR-TASS]* 6
Russia: Duma Gives Conditional Amnesty to Chechen 'Terrorists' *[ITAR-TASS]* 6
Russia: Chechnya Official Says Zavgayev Wants Troops Out *[MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS 8 Feb]* 6
Russia: Shkirko Calls Chechen Situation 'Highly Explosive' *[INTERFAX]* 7
Russia: Commander in Chechnya on Shatoy Troop Withdrawal *[Moscow NTV]* 7
Russia: Struggle for Control of Chechen Oil Viewed *[IZVESTIYA 9 Feb]* 8

INTERREGIONAL AFFAIRS

CIS: Zhirinovskiy, Zyuganov Favor Denouncing Belaya Vezha Accord *[INTERFAX]* 11
CIS: Military-Political Headquarters Holds Assembly, Game *[SEGODNYA 8 Feb]* 11
CIS: Baltic Foreign Ministers Meet in Vilnius *[Vilnius Radio]* 11
CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 9 Feb 12

RUSSIA INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Russia: Ukraine's Kuchma Meets With Christopher in Helsinki *[ITAR-TASS]* 14
Russia: First Meeting of Primakov, Christopher 'Hard To Predict' *[SEGODNYA 9 Feb]* 14
Russia: Chernomyrdin Says NATO Expansion Can Split Europe *[ITAR-TASS]* 15
Russia: Defense Expert Cited on NATO's Eastward Expansion *[Moscow International]* 15

Russia: Ukraine President: No Change in Russian NATO Stance *[INTERFAX]* 17
Russia: Yeltsin, Mikhaylov Discuss Ukraine Nuclear Arms Removal *[ITAR-TASS]* 18
Russia: Shipping Safety Imperilled by Division of BSF *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 8 Feb]* 18
Russia: Grachev Visits Paratroopers in Bosnia *[Moscow ORT* 19
Russia: Grachev in Serbia, Montenegro; Urges Zukic's Release *[INTERFAX]* 19
Russia: Grachev, Milosevic Hold 'Lengthy' Talks in Belgrade *[ITAR-TASS]* 20
Russia: Grachev, FRY Counterpart Cited on Military Ties *[ITAR-TASS]* 20
Russia: Yeltsin's Planned Visits Abroad Remain in Force *[ITAR-TASS]* 20
Russia: Sales of Another SU-27 Consignment to China Confirmed *[ITAR-TASS]* 21
Russia: Relief Supplies Airlifted to Quake Victims in China *[ITAR-TASS]* 21
Russia: Primakov Receives Japanese Ambassador *[ITAR-TASS]* 21
Russia: Soskovets on Japan as Russia's Strategic Partner *[ITAR-TASS]* 21
Russia: Hwang Chang-yop Stresses DPRK, Russia Friendship *[Moscow International]* 22
Russia: Medvedev Calls Tajik Compromise Victory for Common Sense *[ITAR-TASS]* 22
Russia: Admiral Kasatonov on Purpose of Mediterranean Mission *[INTERFAX]* 23
Russia: Poland's Rosati on Bilateral Ties, Primakov Visit *[ITAR-TASS]* 23
Russia: New Ambassador Appointed to Cameroon, Guinea *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 8 Feb]* 24

RUSSIA NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Opens Presidential Council Meeting *[ITAR-TASS]* 25
Russia: Yeltsin Dissolves Human Rights Commission *[OBSHCHAYA GAZETA 8-14 Feb]* 25
Russia: Human Rights Groups Deny Yeltsin Confidence *[OBSHCHAYA GAZETA 8-14 Feb]* 26
Russia: Medvedev Gives Briefing on Current Issues *[INTERFAX]* 26
Russia: Yeltsin Dismisses Foreign Economic Bank Head *[ITAR-TASS]* 27
Russia: Yeltsin Seen Trying To Please Ural Authorities *[IZVESTIYA 9 Feb]* 27
Russia: Yeltsin Discusses Presidential Elections *[Moscow RTV]* 28
Russia: Presidential Council Favors Yeltsin Nomination *[ITAR-TASS]* 28
Russia: Premier Explains Decision To Back Yeltsin *[IZVESTIYA 9 Feb]* 29
Russia: NDR Reaction to Premier's Refusal 'Mixed' *[INTERFAX]* 30
Russia: Zyuganov: Russia Never To Be 'Junior Partner' of U.S. *[Hamburg DIE ZEIT 9 Feb]* 30
Russia: UCP-CPSU Urges Single Communist Candidate *[PRAVDA 6 Feb]* 31
Russia: Primakov Promises Better Defense of Interests *[INTERFAX]* 32
Russia: Stroyev on Regions' Major Role in Reforms *[TRUD 8 Feb]* 32

Media Issues

Russia: Media Said Giving Communists Easy Ride *[EKSPRESS-KHRONIKA 5 Feb]* 36

Military Issues

Russia: Commander Views Air Force Status, Chechnya *[Moscow ORT]* 38
Russia: Kokoshin Cited on Long-Term Armaments Program *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 8 Feb]* 41
Russia: Lobov Says Arms Sales To Increase in 1996 *[ITAR-TASS]* 41

Federal Assembly

Russia: Primakov Tells Duma of Foreign Policy Priorities *[Moscow RTV]* 41
Russia: Duma Deputies Leave To Help Free Hostages in Chechnya *[ITAR-TASS]* 42
Russia: Duma Toughens Stance on Tallin's Anti-Russian Policy *[ITAR-TASS]* 42
Russia: Federation Council Chairman Stroyev Describes Aims *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 9 Feb]* 43
Russia: Stroyev Counts on Cooperation With Yeltsin *[SEGODNYA 8 Feb]* 43

Regional Affairs

Russia: Bashkir President Sees 'No Alternative' to Yeltsin *[INTERFAX]* 43

Russia: Luzhkov Candidate in Jun Moscow Mayoral Elections *[Radio Rossii]* ... 44
Russia: Security Tightened in Kabardino-Balkaria *[ITAR-TASS]* ... 44
Russia: Sevastopol Mayor Blamed for Baltin's BSF Ouster *[PRAVDA 8 Feb]* ... 44
Russia: Arkhangelsk Wants Cut From Plesetsk Satellites *[ITAR-TASS]* ... 46
Russia: Siberian Aircraft Facility Threatened With Closure *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 3 Feb]* ... 46

Economic Issues

Russia: Election-Oriented Spending Jeopardizes 1996 Budget *[SEGODNYA 8 Feb]* ... 47
Russia: Yasin Denies Government Printing Additional Money *[INTERFAX]* ... 47
Russia: Petrov Cited on Attracting Foreign Investors *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 8 Feb]* ... 47
Russia: Ongoing Plight of Sugar Industry Viewed *[SELSKAYA ZHIZN 8 Feb]* ... 49

UKRAINE

International Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma To Make 'Nonofficial' Visit to U.S. *[INTELNEWS]* ... 51
Ukraine: Troops Ready for IFOR Operations *[UKRINFORM]* ... 51
Ukraine: Rukh Chairman Chornovil on Relations With Russia, CIS *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 8 Feb]* ... 51
Ukraine: Kuchma on Restoring Ties With Former Soviet Republics *[INTERFAX]* ... 52
Ukraine: Marchuk: Oil Transport Talks Continue With Russia *[UNIAN]* ... 53
Ukraine: Gas Supplies Continue Despite Pipeline Explosion *[INTELNEWS]* ... 53

National Affairs

Ukraine: Marchuk Comments on Constitution, Arms Reduction *[UNIAR]* ... 53
Ukraine: Marchuk Says Coal Strike Becoming Political Action *[INTERFAX]* ... 53
Ukraine: Unions Accuse Government of Not Abiding Agreement *[UNIAN]* ... 54
Ukraine: Kuchma Crimean Envoy Denies Plans To 'Usurp' Power *[INTELNEWS]* ... 54

Economic Issues

Ukraine: Marchuk Urges Action To Conserve Energy Resources *[INTELNEWS]* ... 54
Ukraine: Resolution on Foreign Investment Detailed *[INFOBANK]* ... 55
Ukraine: Discovery, Extraction of Minerals Declines *[INFOBANK]* ... 55

WESTERN REGION

Belarus

Belarus: NATO Expansion, Role of Russia Discussed *[VO SLAVU RODINY 2 Feb]* ... 56
Belarus: Russia Asked To Not Denounce CIS Founding Document *[INTERFAX]* ... 57
Belarus: President Reaches 'Mutual Understanding' With IMF *[Minsk Radio]* ... 58
Belarus: Government Urged To Retain Holdings in Oil Companies *[ITAR-TASS]* ... 58

Moldova

Moldova: Defense Officials Brief Press on Dniester, Budget *[INFOTAG]* ... 58
Moldova: Snegur: Diplomatic Efforts Help Negotiations With Dniester *[ITAR-TASS]* ... 59
Moldova: Popov Sees No Change in Foreign Policy *[INFOTAG]* ... 59
Moldova: Snegur, Smirnov Discuss 'Mainly' Financial Issues *[INFOTAG]* ... 60
Moldova: Snegur Initiative on Official Language Rejected *[Bucharest Radio]* ... 60

CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Chinese-Kazakh Rail Cooperation Discussed *[KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA 25 Jan]* ... 61

Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Yeltsin Welcomes End of Conflicts *[INTERFAX]* ... 62

Tajikistan: Rakhmanov Thanks Yeltsin for Help During Crisis *[ITAR-TASS]* 62
Tajikistan: New Premier Outlines Government Economic Reforms *[ITAR-TASS]* 62
Tajikistan: Supreme Assembly Issues Amnesty Order for Rebels *[KHOVAR]* 63
Tajikistan: Government Invites Opposition To Address Parliament *[INTERFAX]* 63
Tajikistan: Defense Ministry Denies Report of Opposition Success *[INTERFAX]* 64
Tajikistan: Rebels Claim More Villages Taken *[Voice of Free Tajikistan]* 64
Tajikistan: Vanj Situation Deteriorates as Tavildara Clashes Continue *[Moscow RTV]* 64
Tajikistan: Government Forces Counterattack in Tavildara *[ITAR-TASS]* 65

CAUCASUS

Armenia

Armenia: Armenian Communist on Russian Statement on Karabakh *[SNARK]* 66
Armenia: Delegation Returns From Talks in Georgia *[Yerevan Radio]* 66

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: Foreign Minister, Turkish Envoy Discuss Karabakh Solution *[Baku Radio]* 66
Azerbaijan: Turkey To 'Hasten' Settlement of Azeri-Armenian Conflict *[ITAR-TASS]* 66
Azerbaijan: Aliyev Disagrees With Armenian Proposal for Karabakh *[ITAR-TASS]* 67

Georgia

Georgia: EU Requested To Mediate Abkhazian Conflict *[ITAR-TASS]* 67
Georgia: Abkhazian Leader Continues Consultations in Moscow *[INTERFAX]* 67
Georgia: Communists Deplore CIS Decision on Abkhazia *[PRAVDA 7 Feb]* 68
Georgia: Abkhaz Side Protests Over Georgian Guerrillas' Activities *[IPRINDA]* 68

BALTIC STATES

Latvia

Latvia: Riga Reacts to Russian Admission to Council of Europe *[Riga Radio]* 69

Lithuania

Lithuania: Parliament Votes To Dismiss Prime Minister *[Vilnius Radio]* 69
Lithuania: Parliament Votes Down Government in Censure Motion *[AFP]* 69
Lithuania: President Appoints Acting Prime Minister *[Vilnius Radio]* 69
Lithuania: President, Prime Minister on Dismissal *[Vilnius Radio]* 69
Lithuania: Parliamentary Opposition on Cabinet Formation *[Vilnius Radio]* 71

Terrorist Activity

Russia: Groznyy Protestors Refuse To Negotiate To End Rally

LD0802201596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — Leading members of the Chechen parliament Thursday attempted to persuade protesters in the Chechen capital Groznyy to negotiate an end to their rally now in its fifth day, but their suggestion was turned down by supporters of the Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev.

Parliament speaker Amin Asmayev told INTERFAX the situation in the city remains tense due to the continuing protests, though compared to previous days the number of protesters has shrunk noticeably.

Asmayev did not rule out the possibility of clashes in the city center, if several dozen militants manage to get through to the former presidential palace and take position there.

"We all are for troops' withdrawal and peace in the republic, but this cannot be reached through rallies," the speaker said.

Russia: Security Forces Pull Back From Groznyy Rally

LD0802181696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1722 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Artyushin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Groznyy, 8 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — The OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] forces and special units of the Interior Ministry of the Chechen Republic blockaded the unauthorized rally of Dudayev's supporters in central Groznyy from 1700 till 1900, after which the security forces were pulled back. There were no clashes between the protestors and police.

The pullback seems to be caused by the authorities' hope to reach an agreement with the protestors.

Ruskan Tsakayev, secretary of the Security Council of the Chechen Republic, described the organizers of the unauthorized meeting as "a handful of people who are threatening public security." He told an ITAR-TASS correspondent today that the square in front of the former presidential palace, where the rally has been held since Sunday [4 February], is "Dzhokhar Dudayev's springboard" for plunging the town and the republic in a new war.

The demonstrators, he said, include a large number of fighters, including women, "armed not only with infantry weapons and grenades but also with other weapons." According to Ruslan Tsakayev, weapons and ammunition are being stockpiled in the surrounding half-ruined buildings and groups of fighters are concentrating there.

Nevertheless, Ruslan Tsakayev said, "The Government of the Chechen Republic continues its attempts to establish contact with the organizers of the demonstration and to hold talks."

Another attempt to establish contact with them was made an hour before the start of the operation to seal off the rally, but without success.

Russia: Police Order End to Pro-Dudayev Rally in Groznyy

LD0802173296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1702 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Oleg Artyushin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — Tension build up by 6 p.m. [1500 GMT] near Groznyy's government building, with the pro-Dudayev rally going on since Sunday [4 February].

The Chechen government ordered a stop to the unpermitted rally, and riot police have been moving into the area after 4 p.m.

The square before the government building, which is the former presidential palace, has been sealed off by police lines, with lights of police vehicles on and directed onto the crowd.

No clashes have occurred so far, however.

Russia: Groznyy: Snipers Seen at Presidential Palace

LD0802132696 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1300 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] By noon today in Groznyy, law enforcement officers almost completely fenced off the central square in front of the destroyed presidential palace, the area where the pro-Dudayev forces are holding their rally. The commander of the federal troops said that snipers were seen at the upper floors of the palace. The protesters are digging trenches.

Russia: Additional OMON Units Being Moved to Rally Vicinity

LD0902071996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0625 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Oleg Artyushin and Sharip Asuyev]

[FBIS Translated Text] Groznyy, 9 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — At 0825 the first shots rang out in the vicinity of the spot where the unsanctioned rally is being staged in the center of Groznyy. One of the participants in the rally threw himself with a knife on a member of Chechnya's law enforcement bodies which are on patrol duty near the former presidential palace. Fire was opened on the attacker. The attacker was wounded and taken to hospital.

Additional subunits of the special-purpose militia [OMON] of the Chechen Republic are being moved up to the area where the unsanctioned rally is being held.

A group of Groznyy residents, numbering up to 50, was stopped at about 0900 on Prospekt Pobedy while on their way to where the rally is being staged. The sides are not undertaking any actions that could provoke conflict.

Meanwhile, speaking on Groznyy television on Thursday night, Sharfutdin Lorsanov, head of the Chechen Government administration, accused Chechnya's law enforcement bodies of "lacking readiness to fulfill the government's order to put a stop to the rally in the center of Groznyy." He stressed that the situation resembles that of 1991 and that the indecision of the law enforcement bodies is making the situation worse, allowing the participants in the rally to put forward more and more new demands.

Russia: Commander: Troops Not Interfering in Groznyy Rally

LD0902080196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0750 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Boris Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — Federal troops in Chechnya are ready to resist any provocation by militants, but do not interfere to stop the anti-Russian rally going on for the sixth day in Groznyy, federal troops commander in the rebel republic Vyacheslav Tikhomirov told TASS by telephone on Friday from the Groznyy suburb of Khankala.

The commander said that "nothing extraordinary" had occurred in the republic overnight and the separatists had not launched any large-scale combat actions.

"The situation is under control", Tikhomirov said.

Russia: Chechen Government Says Groznyy Rally To End 9 Feb

LD0902090396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0833 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Oleg Artyushin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — "The unsanctioned rally will be ended today," a high-ranking official from the Chechen Interior Ministry, who is in charge of the units of the law enforcement agencies coming to the scene of the rally, told TASS.

In his opinion, they have all the needed means for that, and the corresponding instructions have already been given. The situation around the rally, and in Groznyy in general, is being kept under control. At the same time, he does not rule out a possibility of provocations on the part of the armed rebels, who are now among the demonstrators, as well as in the city.

The police do not stop those who are leaving the rally, but block the way to those who wish to join it. A group of people were stopped at the Victory Avenue, when they tried to join the rally.

One of the demonstrators was injured, when he made an attempt to stab a policeman with a knife. No other incidents were reported.

The overall situation in Groznyy continues to be calm. Shops, the city market and all the state institutions are functioning. Despite dizzling rain, there are many people in the streets, and the traffic in the city is heavy.

Restrictions on the movement of people and vehicles in the area, where the unsanctioned rally is being held, make Groznyy residents somewhat nervous. Many of them had to go to their offices and factories in a roundabout way today.

Russia: Shots Fired To Disperse New Demonstrators in Groznyy

LD0902093596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0913 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Oleg Artyushin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — Fire into the air was opened from automatic weapons by officers of law enforcement agencies at 12.10 today. They are blocking the approaches to the central part of Groznyy, where the unsanctioned rally is being held. Fire was opened for stopping a group of people, who tried to join the rally. About 50 Groznyy residents came to the Victory

Avenue of Groznyy early in the morning, but they were stopped by officers of law enforcement agencies.

No one was wounded by the fire, and the people who wished to join the rally had to retreat.

Russia: Two Explosions at Chechen Rally; Some Injured

LD0902093996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0931 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Oleg Artyshin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — At least two people were wounded in the anti-Russian rally in Groznyy when two, presumably, grenade explosions rocked it on Friday.

Police told TASS two people were wounded in the first explosion.

No other details were available so far.

Russia: Three Killed in Explosion at Chechen Rally

LD0902103796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1020 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — Three people were killed and seven wounded when an explosion rocked the anti-Russian rally in Groznyy on Friday, the Russian Interior ministry told TASS.

Its spokesman said an "unidentified explosive device" went off at the rally and qualified the action as a "provocation aimed to further destabilise the situation in the Chechen republic".

TASS correspondent in Groznyy earlier said there were two, presumably, grenade explosions at the rally.

Russia: Details of Explosion at Groznyy Rally Given

LD0902155896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1429 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 9 (INTERFAX) — Three undiscovered bomb devices killed three persons and injured seven others attending the mass rally outside the former presidential palace in Groznyy at 11:55 a.m. Friday, the Russian Interior Ministry's press service reports.

The dead and injured are being identified.

The rally demanding the withdrawal of federal troops from Chechnya is now underway for the sixth day in a row.

The Russian Interior Ministry views the bombing as a provocation designed to destabilize Chechnya still further and to add to the anti-Russian and anti-government hysteria.

An official in the Russian Interior Ministry's Chechen board said that the bombing was either a provocation to set the crowd against the federal troops and the Chechen police. Another possibility was that some people in the crowd were assembling bombing devices which they intended to use on the police who are surrounding the square, but the devices went off prematurely, said the official.

The official said that the Chechen police and interior troopers surrounding the square were not hurt.

Supporters of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev fired a grenade from a rifle launcher at the crowd. The police surrounding the square told INTERFAX that the grenade exploded on the bank of the Sunzha river 100 meters away from the rally site. They believe that it was fired from a damaged house on the other bank of the river. There were no casualties.

A man with a sharpened iron bar had earlier rushed at the police who fired in the air to stop him.

The crowd outside the former presidential palace is now estimated at around 2,000. The area is surrounded by municipal police troopers. There are about 10 armored vehicles around.

From the morning of February 9 the police were joined by units of the Russian Interior Ministry, an official of the Russian joint command told INTERFAX.

The official said that the ring around the crowd is strong enough to contain any attempt to break in or out.

"Chechen Interior Ministry and federal troops officers told the rally to disperse and those who bear weapons to surrender them," the official said.

Numerous roadblocks have been installed in the city to prevent the smuggling-in of weapons by separatists.

Russia: Rally Explosion Feared To Be Chechen Provocation

LD0902112796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1059 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — The explosion, which killed at least three people and wounded seven at the opposition rally in central Groznyy on Friday, could have been a provocation from Chechen separatists aimed at organising riots and clashes between demonstrators and police, according to the Russian Interior Ministry.

"The Interior ministry qualifies the action as a provocation aimed at a further destablisation of the situation in the Chechen republic, at the instigation of anti-Russian and anti-government hysteria", the ministry said in a statement.

A Russian military source in the Chechen capital backed the version. "Most evidently, it was a provocation", the source told TASS by telephone from Groznyy.

It is not yet clear what exploded at the rally.

The military source believes a demonstrator could have fired from an underbarrel grenade launcher.

The Interior ministry said it was an "unidentified explosive device".

TASS correspondent in Groznyy earlier said there were two, presumably, grenade explosions at the rally.

Russia: Groznyy Police Say Rally Explosion Killed Two

LD0902115896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1128 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — The death toll of the explosion which rocked the anti-Russian rally on Friday differs, according to various sources.

The Interior Ministry in Moscow said three people were killed and seven wounded, while TASS correspondent in Groznyy reported, quoting local police, that two people were killed and three heavily wounded.

Investigators are working at the site of the explosion, but no exact casualty figures were unavailable so far. [sentence as received]

In the meantime, the rally goes on in Groznyy without riots. The demonstrators continue to demand an immediate withdrawal of federal troops from Chechnya and the dismissal of the government of Doku Zavgayev. They shout out praises to separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev and continue to erect makeshift shelters on the square in front of the former presidential palace.

Police blocked all the streets leading to the palace and only allow people out from the centre of the city.

To stop those heading to join the rally police several times had to fire into the air.

So far no actions were taken by police to disperse the rally. No reinforcements have been spotted.

Military Activity

Russia: Chechen Field Commanders Banned From Government Contact

LD0802175696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1601 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Sharip Asuyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — Chief of Staff of Dudayev's armed formations Aslan Maskhadov has categorically banned his field commanders from maintaining any contacts with representatives of Doku Zavgayev's government. Maskhadov's order issued in a written form was passed on to all field commanders and military commandants of settlements controlled by Dudayev's militants. However, Maskhadov allowed his subordinates to meet commanders of federal troops on a proper level and carry on a dialogue with them.

A spokesperson for the headquarters of Dudayev's formations said that the ban had been imposed so as to prevent the Chechen government from posing as "an organizer of some inter-Chechen dialogue." Another goal is to refute statements made by head of Chechnya Doku Zavgayev who said that "they had been maintaining contacts with some field commanders."

Maskhadov's order, which is fully in line with canons of military red tape, says that any contacts pertaining to possible talks on the Chechen settlement shall be conducted at a state level only.

Russia: Supplies for Troops in Chechnya Exceed Budget

LD0802235396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2325 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — Food, fuel and lubricants for the federal forces in Chechnya ran over budget by 3 trillion rubles in 1995, senior Russian officer responsible for provisions Vladimir Churanov said Thursday. This was in accordance with relevant presidential decrees and helped maintain the troops stationed in the region, he said.

The government and particularly the Finance Ministry are looking for ways to help federal troops in Chechnya, Churanov said. Among possible measures, he named credits against goods for army units and tax incentives for defense enterprises.

Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, Security Council Secretary Oleg Lobov and the whole government are closely monitoring the provision of Russian troops in Chechnya, Churanov said.

Control of the distribution of funds allocated is exercised on three levels: the central department of the Defense Ministry, the command of federal troops in Chechnya and the North Caucasus military district.

"The system for provisions of federal troops in Chechnya was not created from scratch," Churanov said. In addition to the already existing system of the North Caucasus military district, over 100 food storages were built and over 450 pieces of cooking equipment deployed, he said.

Russia: Chechen Experience Leads to Weapons Modifications

LD0802174496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1402 GMT 8 Jan 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — Russian arms manufacturers will take into account the experience of combat operations in Chechnya, the chairman of Russia's state committee for defense industries, Zinoviy Pak, said.

"This is a bitter but useful experience," he said and added that designers and arms manufacturers were already making amendments to their products.

"Those combat operations must teach both politicians and arms designers a good lesson," Pak said.

Russia: Source of Dudayev's Arms Supply Reviewed

964F1008B Moscow ARGUMENTY I FAKTY in Russian No. 6, Feb 96 p 9

[Article by Aleksandr Ivanov: "Arms for Dudayev"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A tragic paradox: The arms manufactured at Russian plants by the moms and dads of the boys fighting in Chechnya kill these very kids, our children. Who armed Dudayev? Who is running supplies to terrorists now? It would be good to have answers to these questions.

Gifts From the Authorities and Russian Troops

First, let us quote a document. From the report of General Ochirov, who visited Groznyy on an inspection tour in the spring of 1992: "...Since October 1991, there have been nonstop provocations against military garrisons and personnel of Groznyy garrison units. **Over this period of time, 80 percent of vehicles and 75 percent of firearms were stolen."**

Current opposition members, too, gladly met with Dudayev at that time, and supported him: Ruslan Khasbulatov, Ramazan Abdulatipov, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, and others.

How many "deadly toys" were given to the prankster Dudayev as a gift? It is no longer a military secret that among the military units stationed in Chechnya were a training tank division (later reorganized into the 173d Guards regional training center), a PVO [anti-aircraft defense] troops communications and information processing center, the MVD's [Ministry of Internal Affairs] 566th escort regiment, Armavir Military Aviation School garrisons, a military hospital, a medical depot and storage facility, and several smaller units. **They had: 226 aircraft, 42 tanks, 36 BMP's [infantry fighting vehicles], and 29,000 submachine guns. And millions of cartridges, tens of thousands of grenades, and hundreds of guns and mine-launchers.**

The impunity of marshals and generals encourages lower ranks to commit transgressions. It is no secret that our soldiers sell cartridges and submachine guns to Chechen commandos for money, or sometimes simply for a bottle of vodka. Last year, 72 criminal cases were opened regarding such crimes. Those who are caught usually are small fry—privates or ensigns. Just how much can these poor guys steal?

Deliveries From the Mafia

Nevertheless, attempts are made to pin the blame for arming Dudayev precisely on these little guys.

Billions of rubles stolen from the trillions allocated by the government for the rebuilding of Groznyy feed the arms mafia. They keep the commandos supplied with state-of-the-art arms. For instance, among the arms seized from the terrorists were 1995-issue submachine guns and satellite communications devices that have not yet arrived in Russian military units, as well as uniforms whose wear-resistance is better by an order of magnitude than those Russian soldiers are outfitted in. Where does this all come from?

Of course, not only from military arsenals. New arms are stolen straight from manufacturing plants. **In Tula alone, 15 criminal groups have been identified over the past year** involved in theft and sales of firearms. An even stronger arms mafia operates in Izhevsk.

The Azerbaijani leadership reacts with considerable irritation to press accusations that until recently the Chechens shipped arms through the transparent Azerbaijani-Dagestani border. But nobody says, after all, that Geydar Aliyev personally encourages the arms mafia. A former Azerbaijani minister of internal affairs—also head of the "Gray Wolves" organization—is mixed up in this, however. The arms were brought in by KamAZ trucks and tractors. **Russian border guards intercepted 53 vehicles and one tractor. In the course of inspection they seized 240 rocket**

projectiles and charges for grenade launchers, 110,000 firearms cartridges, many handguns and submachine guns, military uniforms, and medical supplies weighing a total of more than 7 tonnes.

At the end of last year and the beginning of the current one, mobile motorized groups from Nikopol and Voronezh were moved to the Dagestani-Azerbaijani border. Many holes have been sealed. **The most convenient route for delivering supplies to Dudayev's commandos was now in jeopardy. The Kizlyar tragedy immediately followed.** Because arsenals of war must be replenished. (For your information: A submachine gun barrel is designed for 7,000 rounds; tank and artillery guns wear out even faster.) Which means that Dzhokhar Dudayev will still need mountains of weapons.

Political Reaction

Russia: Chernomyrdin: Chechnya Conflict Will End Peacefully

LD0802134196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1314 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin is convinced that the conflict in Chechnya would end peacefully, but stressed that the rebel republic would remain Russian territory.

"The conflict in Chechnya will be stopped", Chernomyrdin told a session of his Russia Is Our Home movement on Thursday.

"The war is the most complicated issue. I am convinced that a combat triggers only combat, while death triggers only death", said the premier who the president instructed to draft the peace plan for Chechnya in two weeks.

"Chechnya is Russia. We shall restore everything that was ruined in the Chechen republic and relaunch production there. I insist that you explain this government position everywhere", he stressed.

Russia: Duma Gives Conditional Amnesty to Chechen 'Terrorists'

LD0902110796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1038 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — The Russian State Duma declared an amnesty to Chechen terrorists, who were captured during a raid on the Daghestani town of Kizlyar and the village of Pervomayskoye, on condition Chechen militants release all the estimated 70 hostages.

The resolution, which enters into force on Friday and meets the demand of Chechen militants to exchange hostages for captured terrorists by the "all for all" principle, says criminal proceedings and responsibility are to be dropped against "people detained and arrested in connection with unlawful activities of illegal armed formations in the town of Kizlyar and the village of Pervomayskoye on condition of the release of all people captured and forcibly kept by the illegal armed formations".

Chechen separatists are currently holding an estimated 70 Russian hostages who they seized in Daghestan and Chechnya. The number of terrorists captured in Daghestan is not known.

The resolution instructs the office of the Prosecutor General to drop criminal proceedings against the captured terrorists, while the Interior ministry is to exchange them for hostages.

"The amnesty is not implemented if the people captured and forcibly kept by illegal armed formations are not freed", the document reads.

The gang led by terrorist Salman Raduyev stormed Kizlyar taking up to 3,000 hostages from among the local population. They then left with estimated 160 hostages in buses, but were stopped by Russian forces in Pervomayskoye on the border with Chechnya.

A combat operation was launched and an unspecified number of hostages and terrorists was killed in the village. However, some terrorists succeeded to escape with at least 60 hostages.

They freed most of them later, but are still keeping 12 policemen seized in Pervomayskoye.

Besides, the separatists are holding 29 energy workers, at least two dozen construction workers, two Orthodox priests and also claim to have several Russian soldiers who they regard as POWs.

Russia: Chechnya Official Says Zavgayev Wants Troops Out

MK0802144996 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Maksim Kustov: "Is Zavgayev For Withdrawing Troops?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Perhaps the most unexpected development at the ongoing meeting in Groznyy demanding the withdrawal of federal troops has been a statement by the chairman of the republic's Supreme Council, Amin Osmayev.

Appearing on Groznyy television, Osmayev announced that "Doku Zavgayev was the first to think of having the troops withdrawn and is addressing these questions virtually every day." Such an astonishing statement was made perhaps in a bid to somehow shore up the prestige of the pro-Moscow Chechen leader. The point is that Zavgayev is being accused of a demand that the troops should stay in Chechnya, which he allegedly put forward at the Federation Council session on 6 February.

There is no doubt that Zavgayev "and company" would hardly be able to stay in power for long once the Russian troops had been withdrawn. But then, Doku Gapurovich [Zavgayev] cannot take the liberty of openly demanding that the Russian troops, whose bayonets prop up his regime, stay in the republic.

Once they used to say in Russia, "a situation which is worse than that of a governor ['governor' is an old term from horse-breeding jargon for a male horse that was used to excite a mare before she was mated with a stallion of good breeding; 19th century writers, though, assumed the phrase to be based on the office of a 'governor']." Now you can speak of a situation which is "worse than that of Zavgayev." You simply cannot think of a tragicomic situation to cap the one the former party leader of Chechnya has landed in.

Russia: Shkirko Calls Chechen Situation 'Highly Explosive'

LD0802155996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1202 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — A federal troop withdrawal may destabilize the situation in Chechnya, commander of the federal interior troops Lieutenant-General Anatoliy Shkirko told INTERFAX.

Shkirko described a federal troop pullout as "somewhat premature" and the situation, especially today's, as highly explosive.

People, including federal servicemen, die every day in Chechnya, and forces loyal to Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev keep holding federal troops under fire, Shkirko said in an interview with INTERFAX on Thursday.

The question of whether federal forces should withdraw from Chechnya, depends, in Shkirko's view, on Chechen and federal interests.

With Dudayev's advent to power, Chechnya took to "exporting terrorism," Shkirko said, and a federal troop withdrawal will encourage supporters of Dudayev to unleash an even wider campaign of international terrorism.

Shkirko doubts that a federal troop pullout will decrease human losses and repair the wrong. "Dudayev's latest statements tend to prove the terrorist essence of the agonizing regime," he said.

In Shkirko's view, only an in-depth review of all options will prompt a final decision on the matter in question.

Nonetheless, Shkirko calls for "continued dialog between the legitimate Zavgayev government and various Chechen leaders, including Dudayev's closest associates."

Russia: Commander in Chechnya on Shatoy Troop Withdrawal

LD0802222996 Moscow NTV in Russian 1900 GMT 8 Feb 96

[From the "Segodnya" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Here is a reportage by our special correspondents from Shatoy district, where, according to preliminary information, the withdrawal of some federal forces' subunits was to begin.

[Aleksey Tereshchenko] A meeting took place near the village of Shatoy between representatives of the federal command and the Groznyy administration and the elders of the villages of Shatoy district. Around 1400, a helicopter landed in the headquarters of a Russian troop regiment. Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, commander of the joint group of federal forces in Chechnya, and Abdul Abugayev, deputy prime minister of the official government in Groznyy arrived in it. The elders of the villages of Shatoy district, the head of the administration, and head of the militia had been waiting on them since morning. It was not clear whether field commanders were present at the meeting. According to some reports they were, according to others they were not.

A rally was underway at that moment in the center of Shatoy. People have been coming here for six days now to put forward their main demands: that Russian troops should be withdrawn and the local administration should be replaced. The inhabitants of the village consider the latter to be responsible for a peaceful rally in Shatoy on 14 December last year being broken up by a Groznyy Sobr [crack unit] detachment. Twelve people were killed and several tens were injured. If the federal troops leave here, it is only due to the dogged persistence of the people of Shatoy. For two days they insisted on a meeting with Tikhomirov and finally they got it.

[Begin unidentified villager recording] He promised that, in the first instance, the airborne assault regiment, then troops, the 245th motorized rifle regiment, would be withdrawn from this mountain in stages. [end recording]

[Tereshchenko] Incidentally, the withdrawal of troops might turn out to be another regrouping. That already happened in Vedeno district last October when the 506th regiment simply went to a new location.

Aleksey Tereshchenko, Sergey Moroz, Vladimir Krasilnikov, NTV, from Chechnya. [video report shows mountains, helicopter, interview with unidentified villager, rally]

Russia: Struggle for Control of Chechen Oil Viewed

MM0802184696 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 9 Feb 96 pp 1,2

[Report by Valeriy Yakov: "A Further Redistribution of Chechen Oil Could End in Further Bloodshed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A bitter and dangerous struggle has flared up with renewed force at the Chechen oil tap, where aside from anything else parochial and federal interests clash. The parochial is personified by D. Zavgayev and the federal by V. Chernomyrdin. And for the umpteenth time in a strange way the situation on the Chechen oil bridgehead was superimposed almost immediately on the combat and social-political bridgehead.

On the morning of 7 February, in the Groznyy office of the Southern Oil Company ("YUNKO"), Chechnya Industry Minister A. Temishchev declared the liquidation of "YUNKO." A day earlier D. Zavgayev had signed edict No. 18 approving the new structure of the Chechnya Industry Ministry, and all earlier decisions of the government of national revival, including those on the development of the oil complex, are valid only in as far as they do not contradict this edict.

An appendix to the edict lists the enterprises incorporated in the ministry, featuring "Grozneft," "Grozneftesintez," and others, which were part of "YUNKO." And not a word about "YUNKO" itself. Meanwhile a Russian Government decree "On Urgent Measures To Develop the Chechen Republic Oil and Gas Complex in 1996" was supposed to reach Groznyy by 6 February. It essentially approves the creation of a "YUNKO" state unitary enterprise, grants the company customs, tax, and other concessions, and sets "YUNKO" specific tasks. Zavgayev must have known about this document, if only because it bears his official signature. But either he deliberately withheld his edict so that he could now declare one of the associations rightful successor to "YUNKO" together with the transfer of all the concessions accumulated by "YUNKO." Or he decided to play his own preemptive game and the Kremlin orchestrators allowed him to do it, in view of the fact that Chernomyrdin's position was shaky and the premier himself had gone on leave.

The significance Moscow attaches to all the shifts in the leading structures of the Chechen oil complex, even those that are invisible to the general public, is indicated by the mere fact that the situation in this sphere has been repeatedly discussed at Security Council sessions. According to the information we have, the topic also got its due share of attention at the latest Security Council session. For a more than significant reason....

Three months ago, soon after Doku Zavgayev arrived in Groznyy to take charge, IZVESTIYA (No. 212, 9 November 1995) said that a new behind-the-scenes struggle had begun over the Southern Oil Company, set up under the auspices of the Russian Fuel and Energy Ministry and subordinate to the ministry — as a state enterprise of federal status. Probably there would have been nothing strange in this, considering that the oil complex is a key sector for the entire Chechen economy. Consequently, the influence you have on this sector largely determines your ability to control the main processes in the economy — both legal and black-market.

But what seemed strange to us at the time was that Zavgayev, as the Kremlin's protege and a past master at apparatus intrigues, must have known that the republic's oil complex fell within the sphere of Moscow's priority interests. And that any changes of any significance in the "YUNKO" leadership, and in the Chechnya leadership, cannot take place without consultation not only at the federal departmental level, but also at the level of the leadership of the special services, which check whether people have impeccable credentials, are reliable, and so on. Nonetheless there were rumors even than that Zavgayev would try to get his own man in the "YUNKO" president's seat, and they even gave the name of one of his relatives.

The then president of "YUNKO," Ziya Bazhayev, was already known for his independent character and distinct aversion to political intrigues. Having created, with a team of like-minded people, the blueprint for an original state oil company, he was fully engaged in putting this project into practice, finding support not only in Moscow, but also in his own warring republic, which is particularly important. The 35-year-old Swiss businessman, who was not involved with any of the warring sides and had earned respect in the Western oil market, was very suitable not only for Moscow, but for

Chechnya as well. What they said there about Bazhayev, in the style of the local traditions, was simply: "He is rich enough not to steal."

Against the background of general disintegration, to which practically all spheres of life were subject in Chechnya last year, the republic's oil complex was practically the only sector in which there were signs of revival and there were real results. Extraction, refining, and petrochemical supply were functioning. For the first time after a four-year interval the republic's oil complex gained access to export terminals and the Groznyy oil symbol reappeared on the world market. Export deliveries made it possible not only to clear pay debts, but also to obtain the circulating capital necessary for the revival and development of the complex. Together with this stabilization in the company's activities there was a gradual stabilization of the situation in the republic as well, and hostilities switched to a slow-moving negotiating process....

It was quite obvious that the new authorities in Groznyy, on whom, in practice, not much depends in Chechnya and who will only risk moving around "their" republic under cover of federal armor, must as quickly as possible add to their own "successes" some real successes, even if they are someone else's. After the victory in the so-called elections, the number one target had to be the oil complex.

In the third week of January Z. Bazhayev petitioned Minister Yuriy Shafranik "at his own request," and on 26 January the minister relieved him of his post by means of an order. In a separate order he expressed gratitude to Bazhayev "for his great personal contribution and courage" during the restoration of the oil complex. According to the official version, Z. Bazhayev left "for family reasons." But according to our information he simply did not want to "change his ways to suit Zavgayev" and learn to live with the company's reorientation from federal to republican level.

The "YUNKO" president parted with Zavgayev with no breach of diplomatic etiquette, but as soon as he flew out of Groznyy the head of the republic promptly sent a commission to the company for an all-around investigation of its activity. And again Zavgayev was in a bit of a hurry; he must have known that in effect on his initiative B. Yeltsin had already assigned a special interdepartmental commission to carry out an all-around inspection of "YUNKO," sending a resolution to the Federal Security Service, the State Customs Committee, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the tax inspectorate, the Ministry of the Economy, and other interested departments. In the course of the inspection that commission found no cause for complaint against "YUNKO."

Zavgayev's commission, however, was headed by former "Grozneft" leader K. Gaziyev, who was originally appointed by Dudayev and was dismissed under Bazhayev. I think one can wonder about the objectivity of such an inspector. When we contacted D. Zavgayev a few days ago and asked him about the commission's objectives he asked with disarming naivety: "What commission? Who's Gaziyev? It's the first I've heard of it. There is no one of that name in our system." In the light of that answer, it only remains to assume that it was Dudayev who sent the commission.

His answers to other questions were equally curious: "What is your comment on the theory that Bazhayev departed under pressure from you?" "Well, it's rubbish. I wouldn't know how to put pressure on anyone. Unfortunately, I'm a man who likes to compromise, I'm peace-loving, mild, and I suffer a lot because of it." "Are you planning to nationalize the company?" "We will carry out a reform along the lines of the policy being implemented in the country. The reforms will affect everyone." "Will the company be converted into a republic state committee or another kind of institution?" "Well, nothing is eternal, everything is dynamic, in motion...." "And what do you say about the rumors that your son-in-law Bulat Chagayev is after one of the leading posts in the oil complex?" "I'd be delighted, but unfortunately it's not going to happen. I will never allow a clan-based power structure to develop here." "It is well known that Bazhayev, as 'YUNKO' president, was able to obtain security guarantees for the section of oil pipeline that passes through Chechnya. Will these guarantees be preserved now?" "Naturally. There is such great potential on our territory, it must be used to the maximum...."

On 4 October last year the Russian president, by edict, instructed the government to make provision for additional measures to develop Chechnya's oil complex, to set up a state enterprise.... A specific time frame was assigned for implementation of the edict — one month. The draft decree spent four months wandering around the top offices, undergoing significant changes not without the influence of Zavgayev and those who control him at the moment. The republic's oil complex, which was oriented toward the federal level, was quietly robbed of its guiding compass. The head of the republic, who has been granted unlimited powers that even Dudayev never even dreamed of, is obviously impatient to bring the oil tap within the sphere of his powers too. And a section of the oil pipeline bearing Caspian black gold. Thus, for instance, within the structure of the Chechnya Industry Ministry, approved by Zavgayev's edict, there is already a so-called state main pipelines enterprise. That could be taken as meaning that Zavgayev has put the section of pipeline under his own jurisdiction too. Security guarantees for this pipe sound funny coming from Zavgayev, who cannot even ensure his own security without the efforts of the Russian special services.

The new shareout of Chechen oil so hastily undertaken by Zavgayev or those who are behind him is disturbing to say the least. It is quite obvious that the Dudayevites and their eastern sponsors will also begin to stir, laying claim to their own share of the pipe and the tap (is this, in fact, what prompted the new upsurge of demonstrations?!). And Chernomyrdin and the Ministry of Fuel and Energy will not just swallow Zavgayev's attack, they will find an opportunity to respond if they are allowed to. And the gray oil captains who had managed to come to terms with the emergence of "YUNKO" and make room for Bazhayev will tense their muscles. At any rate, the Tikhoretskaya oil base has already frozen the dispatch of 160,000 tonnes of Chechen oil for export, and now Groznyy, instead of receiving foreign currency revenue, will have to pay for storage.

Clearly, Mr. Zavgayev has been allowed too little time to hold sway in Chechnya, and is having to hurry in order to achieve at least something for his own benefit and that of his comrades. But such haste promises no good for the pipe or the tap. Or rather, for Russian oil interests and political interests in the region. Dudayev, in his day — and he also, incidentally, was brought into Groznyy by Moscow — started by moving the compass needle toward the national level and sharing out the oil. And he too reached for the tap in his first move. It looks as if this experience either suited Moscow, or else taught it nothing.

CIS: Zhirinovskiy, Zyuganov Favor Denouncing Belaya Vezha Accord

LD0802174596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1402 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy backs the idea of denouncing the Belaya Vezha 1991 agreements which created the Commonwealth of Independent States provided a vote on this issue is taken together "with a decision to make answerable those who connived in them.

"These are primarily Yegor Gaydar, Gennadiy Burbulis, Sergey Shakhray and Andrey Kozyrev who were most responsible for developing this document," Zhirinovskiy said in an interview with INTERFAX Thursday.

Those members of Russia's former Supreme Soviet who voted for ratification of this document should also be made answerable, Zhirinovskiy said. "If we simply denounce the Belaya Vezha agreements and do not make answerable those who gave them the force of a law then it'll appear that we are releasing from responsibility those who have committed this political provocation," he said.

Speaking at the State Duma session Wednesday [7 February] during discussion of a program of priority legislative initiatives for 1996, Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov also favored denouncing the Belaya Vezha agreement. If communists come to power, he said, the Belaya Vezha agreements should be denounced, however it would not mean "a coercive unification of the former Soviet republics."

CIS: Military-Political Headquarters Holds Assembly, Game

MK0802135296 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Yuriy Golotyuk: "CIS States Learn Jointly To Repulse Aggression"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A working assembly of military officers and generals of the Headquarters for Coordination of Military-Political Cooperation Between CIS Member States ended in Moscow yesterday. As SEGODNYA's correspondent was advised at the Headquarters, for five days Russian military men and their colleagues from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan "have been upgrading their command and staff preparation level."

During the assembly, headquarters staffers attended lectures by leading military theoreticians and analyzed prospects for integration within the Commonwealth framework, as well as trends in the evolution of the military-political situation in the world's most explosive regions. Yesterday, a full-scale command and staff game was held. For the first time in the CIS history, officers and generals from as many as nine Commonwealth countries took part in it. During the game, they practiced "repulsing aggression and routing an intruding enemy." True, the "aggressor" was purely abstract, and the place where it intruded into CIS territory was not specified either, your SEGODNYA correspondent was told at the headquarters.

Generally, participants in the assembly sought to avoid any military specifics, giving preference to pure theory. At least, the situation evolving in zones of real military conflicts on the territory of CIS member states, such as those in Chechnya and Tajikistan, was not discussed at the assembly, the participants in the event admitted.

CIS: Baltic Foreign Ministers Meet in Vilnius

LD0702211096 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1700 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ministers of foreign affairs of the three Baltic states held a one-day conference in Vilnius today. Here is Leonora Abraityte reporting from the news conference held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[Correspondent] According to Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Povilas Gylys, this meeting should have been held somewhat earlier. However, for various reasons it was held today.

[Gylys] We spoke about cooperation between our Baltic states in various spheres and also about common European and trans-Atlantic affairs. I have in mind the integration with the European Union, (?our relations) with NATO. We also spoke about our relations with the neighbouring countries.

[Correspondent] The problems of transit within the Baltic countries were also discussed: border crossing regulations, setting up the information data base infrastructure (?which would register) the movement of people across the border. [passage omitted]

Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs Valdis Birkavs said that he was pleased with the results of today's conference.

[Birkavs in English translated into Lithuanian] We have signed a number of agreements on future work and we laid out our strategy for uniting the economic relations of the Baltic states. Latvia is showing an initiative to start the training of military forces of the Baltic states, Valdis Birkavs said.

According to him, three main economic issues have been discussed today: how to join the World Trade Organization, export and import of strategic goods and a tripartite agreement on free trade in agricultural goods between the Baltic states.

Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs Siim Kallas stressed that valuable information was exchanged today about the latest political contacts and a useful discussion was held on the issue of security.

Answering a question with regard to relations with Russia and the visit of the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yevgeniy Primakov, Povilas Gylys said that all Baltic states are interested in having good relations with all the neighbours including Russia. Answering the journalist's question about the Latvian-Lithuanian negotiations on the maritime border delimitation, Valdis Birkavs said that we will start the negotiations from zero with the Maisiagala memorandum (?behind us) and the maritime border in front of us.

According to Povilas Gylys, the negotiations could start in a month.

Incidentally, when asked if the Baltic states felt more secure Mr Birkavs said, yes, however, we do not have any security guarantees.

Povilas Gylys maintained [passage indistinct]. Answering a question whether cooperation between the Baltic states meant the beginning of the defence union, Povilas Gylys answered we are talking about cooperation in critical situations, i.e. in fighting fires, disasters on the sea and so on. The governments of the Baltic states support political and economic cooperation and also cooperation between defence departments.

[Gylys] I think that here we must distinguish between the idea of a defense union and political and economic cooperation, and cooperation in the sphere of defence. We do not support the idea of a defense union.

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 9 Feb

LD0902064396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0624 GMT 9 Feb 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — Follows a review of Friday's Moscow-based Russian newspapers.

IZVESTIYA on second-term idea for Boris Yeltsin.

Yeltsin should continue as President of Russia, and the Our Home is Russia movement will promote his electoral success, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin has told the newspaper.

The leadership of Boris Yeltsin is the expression of the idea of social peace, Chernomyrdin said. At the same time the Premier condemned populist steps, stating that he will counter populism as long as he is at the head of the government.

Possibilities for the co-citizens to come to feel a change for the better in everyday life are inherent in the economic policy, which is being pursued by the government, he said.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on government bid to repay wage arrears and social benefits.

The newspaper carries remarks made by Viktor Chernomyrdin at a meeting of the OHR [Our Home is Russia] Political Council. Wage arrears in the budget-supported sphere is 7,500,000 million roubles as of now, the Premier said.

Therefore, the main task of the government in the first half of this year will be to prevent an increase in social tension and to repay all wage arrears and social benefits.

Chernomyrdin is of the opinion that serious shifts in the solution of the problems will come about this month. There should be no attempts to undermine the budget by populist decisions which may nullify all that has been achieved," the newspaper points out.

IZVESTIYA on possible consequences of economic populism.

The newspaper gives the opinion of Yegor Gaydar who believes that expenditure-related decisions being taken of late cannot materialise, for, in essence, they will remain just declarations which would only increase the scope of unfulfilled promises, bring about additional social problens and engender additional conflicts in society. So, politically, such an economic strategy would turn out to be utterly unprofitable.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on inquiry into financial machinations in Chechnya.

"'Sensational' statements by the Prosecutor-General of the Russian Federation about billions that are embezzled in Chechnya have failed to frighten the embezzlers," the newspaper writes.

"This war is of benefit to Dudayev, who is financed by Chechen entities from 14 countries; to Russian ministries, which get trillions-worth orders; to banks, which spin those trillions; to state officials, who distribute the orders and funds; and to politicians, who score points resultant of their anti-war pronouncements".

IZVESTIYA on a recarving of Chechnya's oil sector.

The newspaper runs an article headlined "A new re-carving of the Chechen oil sector may result in another bloodshed".

"The oil sector of Chechnya is the key branch of the republic's entire economy. Therefore, the one who gets hold of it gains an ability to control the main processes in the republic — both legal and shadow ones.

"A certain state-run oil trunklines enterprise is already figuring within the structure of the Chechen Ministry of Industry. It is clear that the Dudayev men will not tolerate that, laying claim to their share of the pipe with oil. Can it be that this is the cause of the upsurge in Chechen meetings and rallies in Groznyy in recent days?"

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on Russian textile industry problems.

"Will our fashion-conscious women be able to sew new sun-frocks and dresses from printed calico by summer?" the newspaper asks.

"The national textile industry may soon disappear due to blows from competitors from Uzbekistan and the sluggishness of managers of the state purse," the newspaper points out.

Russia: Ukraine's Kuchma Meets With Christopher in Helsinki

LD0802215096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2107 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Vladimir Mostovets]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] HELSINKI, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, finishing an official visit to Finland, on Thursday [8 February] night met U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Christopher arrived in Helsinki a few hours ago for talks with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov.

Kuchma and Christopher had a brief conversation which was not in Kuchma's programme but, with Primakov coming on Friday, the opportunity of the contact was used.

The talk was behind closed doors, but Kuchma told a press conference prior to the meeting that he would discuss his planned visit to the U.S. with Christopher, as well as prospects of Ukraine to get assistance from the International Monetary Fund.

Kuchma also summed up his visit to Finland. He said he was satisfied with results of the talks he had held.

He said he met in Finland interest and understanding of Ukraine, but Ukraine is not well known by Finland and should be more active in demonstration of its economic potential.

Russia: First Meeting of Primakov, Christopher 'Hard To Predict'

MK0902121996 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 9 Feb 96 p 9

[Article by Leonid Velekhov: "Primakov-Christopher: First Meeting of Equal Partners"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Federation Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov is leaving this afternoon for Finland for two-day talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in a resort spot near Helsinki. The Friday evening talks will be held in an informal atmosphere, over supper, with the contacts assuming their full official parameters on Saturday. The Russian Foreign Ministry is not revealing the agenda in detail; however, even without this it is clear that the heads of the Russian and U.S. foreign policy departments, who are meeting for the first time, will discuss a broad spectrum of bilateral relations and compare notes, as diplomats like to say, on key issues of world politics. One can expect that Mr. Primakov will come up against a diplomatic but rather tough stance by Mr. Christopher with regard to the latest developments in Russia, which the latter formulated several weeks ago in what was for him an unusually pointed lecture at Harvard University.

Incidentally, Christopher's criticism, if it is aired at all, will hardly catch the Russian minister unawares. Despite the fact that he objected in one of his first press conferences to being described as "tough," Yevgeniy Primakov will of course implement — and is already implementing — a foreign policy which differs from the one followed by his predecessor and is more tough and independent of Russia's world partners, primarily the United States. This policy will hardly be isolationist — at any rate, this is not going to happen as long as the current administration remains in power in the Russian Federation, whereas its objective of strengthening Russia as a regional power (relations with CIS countries as Russia's main foreign policy priority is the fond idea of the Russian Foreign Ministry today) will inevitably entail a reappraisal of many past values — the replacement of the rhetoric of the greatness and might of Russia as a "world power" with efforts to boost Russian influence where it still holds, and the revision of slogans of the "Partnership for Peace" type that have now been frayed by ideological gusts.

The idea for "partnership, but an equal partnership," already mouthed by Primakov, will, one must assume, form the basis of his behavior primarily with regard to the United States, meaning that Russian-American relations will largely come to resemble a chess game where the opponent's and your own moves are calculated in advance, with no hope that your rival will "slip up" or show sympathy, with his maneuvers loaded with stratagems and pitfalls, and whatever sacrifices he makes being aimed at winning an advantage.

It is, however, hard to predict what we will see in Helsinki — preparations for a match or the first game. The urbanity and restraint typical of both interlocutors could hold them back from even the slightest discussions in the course of this ice-breaking meeting. What is really important, however, is that there are reasons and subjects for discussion. They include the already mentioned situation in Russia and the already tired topic of NATO's eastward expansion, which has gained a new edge of late. With regard to the latter, Russian diplomats seem to be gathering ammunition for a fresh counterattack. A conviction has already taken root in the Duma that "the necessary sociopolitical conditions are not ripe in Russia" for the ratification of the treaty on strategic offensive weapons, START II, signed by Yeltsin and Bush three years ago and ratified by the U.S. Senate the other day. General Rokhlin, Duma defense committee chairman, will subject this document to expert analyses and hearings and append it to the committee's already developed "criteria of assessment based on the question of the changed possibilities for implementation of START II in the wake of the Soviet Union's disintegration and especially considering plans for NATO's eastward expansion." "In the event of the North Atlantic Alliance's moving closer to the Russian Federation's borders," the general sums up in an INTERFAX interview, "not only strategic, but also operational-tactical missiles could be placed on call."

That Yevgeniy Primakov appeared in the Duma yesterday on the eve of his trip to meet with Christopher proves his disinclination to ignore this assembly's opinion.

The fact that the Russian minister is off to the meeting accompanied by a very narrow circle of persons, and that media access to the talks' venue is "extremely limited," according to the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry's official spokesman, Grigoriy Karasin, indicates that Primakov's meeting with Christopher will not be simply a sociable, but rather a businesslike and perhaps even not a simple meeting.

Russia: Chernomyrdin Says NATO Expansion Can Split Europe

LD0802185896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1841 GMT 8 Jan 96

[By Artem Protasenko and Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin on Thursday re-confirmed Russia's consistency in the issue of NATO's eastward expansion.

At a briefing after his meeting with Danish Prime-Minister Poul Rasmussen, Chernomyrdin emphasized that Russia is against any initiative to expand NATO eastward.

"This will result in Europe's split. We should think about how to strengthen Europe and organise European security, not how to put up new obstacles", he said.

Commenting on this issue, Rasmussen said he discussed the problem of NATO expansion on Thursday with Russia's Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov and "indirectly" — with Chernomyrdin.

The Danish premier confirmed that "our countries held different views upon the matter, yet we do not treat the NATO issue as an isolated problem, but regard it in the context of cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the 'Partnership for Peace' program."

Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin is convinced that the conflict in Chechnya will end peacefully, but stressed that the rebel republic would remain the Russian territory.

"The conflict in Chechnya will be stopped", Chernomyrdin told a session of his Russia Is Our Home movement on Thursday.

"The war is the most complicated issue. I am convinced that a combat triggers only combat, while death triggers only death", said the premier whom the president instructed to draft a peace plan for Chechnya in two weeks.

"Chechnya is Russia. We shall restore everything that was ruined in the Chechen republic and rehabilitate production there. I insist that you explain this government position everywhere", he stressed.

Viktor Chernomyrdin accentuated once again Moscow's readiness to settle the Chechen conflict by peaceful means after the end of the Russian-Danish intergovernment talks.

"Moscow is prepared to resolve the conflict in Chechnya with a less bloodshed and by peaceful means if leaders of illegal armed formations are capable of this," he said at a meeting with journalists.

During the Russian-Danish talks the Chechen problem was also discussed and "Russia's stand for the peaceful settlement of the conflict was confirmed," the premier pointed out.

He informed that during almost all the time of the confrontation in Chechnya, representatives of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), including those from Denmark, were observing the situation in the zone of the conflict.

"Some positions of the federal authorities of Russia concerning the Chechen conflict, met with an understanding from the Danish side," since "gangsters and terrorists have the same complexion everywhere and the attitude to them is also the same in the entire world," the head of the Russian government stressed.

Terrorism and gangsterism present a problem not only for Russia but have an international character, the premier stated.

Russia: Defense Expert Cited on NATO's Eastward Expansion

LD0802212896 Moscow Voice of Russia World Service in English 1600 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] NATO's expansion eastward and the position of Russia continue to be the focus of attention for political, public, and military circles, and news media in many countries. Our commentator

Vitaliy Glazinov has met with the head of the strategic studies center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the deputy chairman of the defense committee of the lower house of parliament Aleksey Arbatov.

[Begin recording] [Glazinov, in English] Mr. Arbatov, the recent international conference on European security in Munich has confirmed the two different positions in NATO enlargement to the east. Western representatives at the conference said that enlargement is possible taking into account the position of the Russian Federation. Russian side, on the contrary, totally opposed this. How would you comment on this situation?

[Arbatov, in English] Well, I think that Russian representatives were correct. I agree with them. I think that NATO should not extend because that would eventually lead to a new split of Europe. If NATO extends to the east Russia certainly would like to extend to the west and to have political, military alliance with Belarus, Ukraine, maybe Moldova, maybe some Transcaucasus countries, Kazakhstan, also for defensive purposes and the for the reasons of stability and you have to agree that the situation with stability is much worse in the former Soviet Union, in what we call Near Abroad, than in central Europe where countries like Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary are the most stable of all post-communist countries. It has been known that the private dialogue, it was called so, with these countries, NATO will [?start again] at the beginning of April. Certainly will create a very negative situation.

Well, I think that results would be negative. I do not think that the roof would fall on our head. It should not be exaggerated and dramatized. Some of our officials, running from one extreme to the other. Two or three years ago they were welcoming NATO extension and Russia. During [words indistinct] now they are taking extreme position on the other side and saying that it would lead to military confrontation, conflict, that they threaten NATO. They trying in some ways to, even to blackmail, this is also a very wrong position and a self-defeating position. But clearly extension of NATO does not answer two basic questions. One question, if NATO is a military alliance for defense against some external threat then what is the threat to Poland or to the Czech Republic? Apparently Russia is not a threat. It is first of all not bordering the Czech Republic and many other countries. Its only, if only very narrow piece of land borders Poland, clearly Kaliningrad area cannot produce any threat for Poland. So Russia is not a threat. Then we should be answered directly and in a very unequivocal manner what is the threat which would entitle or warrant extension of NATO to the east. If NATO, on the other hand, is something different — what we hear from the West that it is a not a defensive alliance against external enemy but rather a collective security system for stability — then the question is why Russia is not invited. It's clear that Russian participation in such an organization, with all due respect to central European states, is much more crucial for European stability than membership of for example of Slovakia or even Poland and the Czech Republic. If NATO really believes that NATO is transforming into an organization for collective security, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, then its position should be different. It should be like that Russia is certainly invited, provided that Russia fulfills certain conditions on which countries are invited. Russia will be most welcome, maybe even ahead of some of central European states like Slovakia. Now there is talk of inviting Albania, Croatia, Slovenia [word indistinct]. By all reasons Russia warrants such an invitation much more. Again we do not hear anything clear in response to this question. That is why Russia now so negatively is looking at this subject since NATO extension excluding Russia will certainly lead to a new split of Europe along new borders which is something that is to be avoided. A post-Cold War world was based on the principle of no new split, no new confrontation, no new arms race. We are told that NATO is going to extend but will enhance and welcome partnership with Russia. Well, partnership is a very weak word. Clearly, if Slovakia or Croatia are members of NATO those would have much greater effect on NATO policy then Russia being just a partner of NATO. So again the question is, which country is more important for European security?

[Glazinov] There is another problem which on my point of view is in close touch with that we are talking of about. I mean the ratification of START II treaty in State Duma. There is a number of delegates of deputies, and maybe you are among them, all directly oppose this ratification. They say openly that the ratification of START II treaty would weaken the defense ability of the Russian Federation.

[Arbatov] Well, I do not belong to these deputies. I am still in favor of START II, although this treaty has a lot of deficiencies. But there is no reason to hope that we might have better treaty if we have thrown away START II. So I am in favor of ratification regardless. But I think that extension of NATO among other [word indistinct] would certainly make this task very difficult if not impossible for those in the State Duma who are in favor of ratification and implementation of START II.

[Glazinov] There are [?prominent] figures in the West that understand that these games with NATO may have not good consequences. For example the defense minister of France has called for a special security treaty with Russian Federation and his American colleague also said that there should be signed some treaties about the NATO Partnership for Peace. What is your opinion on this matter?

[Arbatov] Well, I am in favor of all treaties even if they have marginal effect on stability and good relations. I think that treaties of that type are not harmful and may be marginally useful. But this is separate question. It does not cover or does not negate the legitimate issue of the necessity of NATO extension. I think that Western policy on this subject is very wrong and what actually NATO tells Russia is that we have decided that NATO would extend — that is, without any question, without any doubt — but we are going to negotiate with Russia on conditions on other treaties about that question. Well, since the question of NATO extension is not clear and I have raised two most important issues with the character of NATO and necessity for its extension, no other treaties of partnership or whatever would be able to touch the split and the controversies that would necessarily ensue like that. It's just like if we said that we have decided for ourselves to have military alliance with Ukraine and with Yugoslavia and we can only negotiate conditions but not [?very fact of the necessity] of this extension. Certainly the West would be strongly against that type of policy and I think that, if Russia is really treated like an equal partner and legitimate participant in the European security system, then the whole policy of taking decisions [?first] on the necessity of to extend and then discussing which countries to accept for when on what conditions is putting the [?whole matter] on its feet, on its head.

[Glazinov] In your point of view as a specialist, are there any principle ways to narrow the positions of the West and the Russian Federation concerning the enlargement to the east. For example the head of the Russian delegation at that conference [word indistinct] that the defense minister proposed that [word indistinct] system of security involved all the groups of countries and blocs, different blocs under the cover of Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE]. Do you share this point of view or do you have something to say more?

[Arbatov] Oh, in principle I share this position and I was actually advocating this as early as two or three years ago, during the period of [word indistinct]. But there are two very important [word indistinct] about Russian policy and Russian stance on this subject. First, that Russia has never worked thoroughly and properly in favor of restructuring the OSCE to make it a real international organization for decision-making and policy implementation on conflict resolution and peacekeeping. In fact, in making this organization, something like European United Nations with this structural mechanism and maybe armed forces, designed and earmarked for this purpose. Russia has never proposed anything sensible on that. Russia has never negotiated in the lateral private manner conditions for this restructuring with individual European countries or the United States. That is the first serious deficiency of Russian policy. The second is that declarations do not substitute for consistent practical policy. If Russia is really so interested in this subject it is not enough to declare it once in a while. It is necessary to link to this goal which certainly has priorities over other issues in Russian relations with the West, Russian relations with central Europe, and Russian relations with other former Soviet republics. [passage omitted]

Probably Russian Government and president have up to now failed to construct a consistent foreign policy and strategy that would gear all efforts and all Russian agreements and steps to the goal of creating pan-European international multilateral security organization to substitute for the bloc to bloc relationship that existed during the Cold War. [passage omitted: further on Russian foreign policy deficiencies] [end recording]

Russia: Ukraine President: No Change in Russian NATO Stance

LD0802223996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2032 GMT 8 Feb 96

["INTERFAX-UKRAINE" news item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Helsinki, February 8 (INTERFAX-UKRAINE) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma does not believe that Russia has changed her attitude to NATO's expansion.

"I don't think that one person (recently appointed Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov — IF-U [INTERFAX-UKRAINE] note) is able to change the politics of such a country as Russia within such a short period of time," he told a press-conference here today.

Commenting on the statement made by Y.Primakov during his recent visit to Kiev, L. Kuchma said: "I liked Mr Primakov's pronouncement to the effect that none of the countries has the power to veto membership of another state in one or another military-political alliance".

"As far as I know, I was first to make this pronouncement way back a year and a half ago," Kuchma said, emphasizing that Ukraine's view on NATO has remained unchanged".

"Our main wish is to be a full-fledged member of the European community, and only then other issues will come up", the Ukrainian President said.

Russia: Yeltsin, Mikhaylov Discuss Ukraine Nuclear Arms Removal

LD0802180896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1736 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Veronika Romanenkova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — President Boris Yeltsin met Atomic Energy Minister Vyacheslav Mikhaylov today to discuss the removal of Ukraine's nuclear weapons to Russia, to be complete in 1996.

Ukraine is to give up the weapons which Russia undertakes to scrap or recycle under international accords.

The press service of the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry told ITAR-TASS that Yeltsin and Mikhaylov discussed a range of issues, including the preparation for the Moscow nuclear security summit meeting of the "political G8" to be held on April 19 and 20, which refers to the club of seven rich nations plus Russia's political say.

Mikhaylov recounted to the president the nuclear sector's performance in 1995. He said there were four technical incidents at nuclear power plants in 1995, as against 13 in 1994.

Yeltsin stated approval of the improved statistics and of the sector's work.

He stressed the need for the financing of Russia's nuclear centres, including its ten closed cities, by the state.

The talk also concerned restructuring in the atomic ministry's network, in particular the setting up of new firms with export licences.

Russia: Shipping Safety Imperilled by Division of BSF

MM0802193796 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 3

[Article by Vladimir Pasyakin: "SOS Gets Louder and Louder.... Black Sea Fleet Division Affects Shipping Safety"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 26 December 1995 the dry cargo ship Simba-1, with a displacement of several thousand tonnes and a Ukrainian crew of 12, left Taganrog under the Ukrainian flag. It was carrying 1,860 tonnes of sheet metal in rolls, which was a clear case of overloading. While crossing from the Azov to the Black Sea the ship changed its Ukrainian flag for the Maltese flag and headed for the Bosporus. On 29 December from south of Yalta it gave its last report to Istanbul, after which contact with the ship was lost. All that was known was that it had run into a force-six gale.

The Turkish shipowner sought help from Odessa Rescue Coordination Center, which in turn requested that the Black Sea Fleet [BSF] take part in the search for the lost ship.

Meanwhile events were developing as follows. The Volgo-Balt 168, which had arrived in Istanbul, reported an SOS signal it had received from the Simba-1 at 1000 hours 30 December approximately 150 miles from the Bosporus. Subsequently a Mayday distress signal was heard on international channel 16. That means that the crew was alive and kicking. This encouraged the hope that it would be rescued. Following an appeal by the rescue coordination center a Black Sea Fleet An-26 SP search and rescue aircraft was prepared for the search operation. But because of weather conditions it was unable to take off either on the evening of 4 January or during the entire foggy day of 5 January.

Further information on the fate of the Simba-1 has still not been received. Will the ship be found, are any of the crew still alive? As yet there is no answer to these questions.

Behind this individual case lies a problem of enormous importance which has already been talked about many times. Sailing in the Black and Azov Seas is becoming increasingly problematic and dangerous because of the division of the Black Sea Fleet and the demise of the once unified and smoothly functioning system of observation, communications, radio navigation, and hydrographic services for ships and vessels.

This was discussed at December's conference of South Russia power structures in Yeysk and this was also reported at a recent meeting between the Black Sea Fleet command and journalists. In particular, it was noted that, of the 1,118 markers and beacons on the Black Sea coast from Izmail to the Caucasus which once served the Black Sea Fleet, around 60 percent are not currently functioning for various reasons. Accidents and sinkings of ships of various classes and types have become an everyday occurrence and at the same time the logical result of the Black Sea Fleet's disintegration.

Black Sea Fleet ships used to be in fishing grounds, protected USSR ships from pirate attacks, and provided navigational and search and rescue support. That is now impossible. Will anybody be able to restore the dismantled system which, like many ships and vessels now, is sending out an SOS distress signal for all to hear?

Russia: Grachev Visits Paratroopers in Bosnia

LD0802221396 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 8 Feb 96

[From the "Vremya" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian defense minister is visiting former Yugoslavia. He called on Russian paratroopers serving with IFOR [Implementation Force] to be as disciplined and circumspect as possible during their peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[Correspondent Aleksandr Onosovskiy] The Russian defense minister's program during his official visit to the Balkans is an extremely busy one. Immediately after his arrival at the U.S. air base at Tuzla, Pavel Grachev and George Joulwan, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, flew to Ugljevik, the headquarters of the Russian independent airborne assault brigade. There the generals heard a report from Col Lintsov, the brigade commander. Then they spent an hour in one-to-one talks. As a result they came to the unanimous view that the Russian peacekeepers were doing a fine job.

Afterwards the defense minister held a conference with the brigade's officers, during which he explained his position on the forthcoming reorganization of airborne assault forces.

[Begin Grachev recording] It is for me and you to determine the shape of airborne assault forces. So, don't listen to anybody else. If you see reports that airborne assault forces are being disbanded, don't believe them. Spit in their faces. On the contrary, we are strengthening them. I want to make you, together with your commander, the backbone, the combat backbone of airborne assault forces. [end recording]

[Onosovskiy] At the end of the meeting several officers who have excelled were given early promotion.

This morning Pavel Grachev visited several guard posts and positions occupied by individual subunits of the brigade.

In Bosnia the Russian paratroopers are covering one of the most difficult sectors. Here there are over 4,000 minefields alone. The area beyond these flags is out of bounds. [video shows red flags and barbed wire] It is too dangerous. The mines are the biggest problem, but they can only cleared when the snow melts.

In the afternoon the Russian defense minister flew to Belgrade where he held talks with President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia. During his official visit Pavel Grachev will also meet Momir Bulatovic, the President of Montenegro, Pavle Bulatovic, the FRY defense minister, and other officials.

This is Aleksandr Onosovskiy and Sergey Shishkin reporting for ORT from Tuzla and Belgrade.

[Video shows Grachev and Joulwan inspecting a U.S. guard of honor at an air base; glimpse of IFOR armored personnel carrier and helicopters; Russian troops camped out in the snow; red flags and barbed wire indicating minefield; Grachev's meeting with Milosevic]

Russia: Grachev in Serbia, Montenegro; Urges Zukic's Release

LD0802210296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BELGRADE, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev arrived in the capital of Serbia and Montenegro for an official visit scheduled for later in the day. Grachev will meet with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and the republic's military and political leadership.

During the visit, which is to end on February 9, Grachev is expected to sign a memorandum on military cooperation with his Serbian counterpart.

Speaking with reporters at the Belgrade airport, Grachev said that at the meeting with Milosevic he plans to discuss the situation with Bosnia, as well as the role played by Russia and Serbia in ensuring European security as whole.

The Russian minister said that on Wednesday he had discussed with the Bosnian Serb military leadership the incident when the Serbian general Zukic was captured in Sarajevo last week.

"This man is not on the list of military criminals and must be released," said Grachev.

Earlier Grachev visited the base of the Russian Airborne brigade which, as part of the multinational forces, is taking part in the peace-keeping operation to fulfil the Dayton understandings.

Russian paratroopers are on duty at all 12 check points. There were no casualties among the Russian servicemen during the airlifting and deployment in Bosnia.

A spokesman for the Russian brigade's command has told INTERFAX that over 4,000 mine fields are to be cared for by the Russian contingent. Paratroopers patrol an area of 70 kilometers by 45 kilometers.

Russia: Grachev, Milosevic Hold 'Lengthy' Talks in Belgrade

LD0802185996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1750 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Mikhail Shevtsov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 8 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — The stabilization of the situation in the Balkans and the implementation of the peace agreement in Bosnia-Herzegovina were the focus of attention at the lengthy talks held in Belgrade today between Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, who has arrived in the Yugoslav capital on a two-day official visit, and Serb President Slobodan Milosevic.

According to the official press release of the Serb leader's office, Milosevic and Grachev devoted a great deal of attention to the prospects for military and technical cooperation between the two states. It was noted that the efforts of the world community, including Russia, have produced good results for strengthening peace and stability in the Balkans and restoring confidence between the states and peoples in the region. Milosevic stressed the importance of the world community treating all the parties to the conflict in an unbiased and equal way, as well as the importance of developing constructive cooperation between them and the international peace implementation force in Bosnia.

The talks between Pavel Grachev and Slobodan Milosevic were held behind closed doors. Neither Yugoslav nor Russian journalists, who are accompanying the minister during his visit, were even allowed into the building of the Presidium of Serbia where the meeting took place.

An ITAR-TASS correspondent has learned from sources in the Russian military delegation that during the visit a memorandum on cooperation in the military field is to be signed between the Defense Ministries of the two countries. The document will render concrete expression to a similar agreement signed by the Russian and FRY defense ministers in Moscow a year ago.

Russia: Grachev, FRY Counterpart Cited on Military Ties

LD0902062996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0234 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Mikhail Shevtsov and Ivan Ivanov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 9 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — "If you want peace, prepare for war;" this truth, tested throughout the centuries, was reaffirmed in the talks late on Thursday evening between Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, who is in the FRY on an official visit, and Yugoslav Defense Minister Pavle Bulatovic. At any rate, it is this conclusion that follows from the official communique for the press issued by the Yugoslav Defense Ministry's news service on the results of the meeting. During this meeting, it was stressed that the development "of multilateral cooperation in the defense sphere is of immense importance for strengthening peace, international security, and stability" between Russia and Yugoslavia.

Unfortunately, neither the Russian journalists accompanying P. Grachev on his tour to the Balkans nor those permanently accredited in Yugoslavia were able to receive more intelligible information on the content of the meeting between the two ministers which lasted almost two hours. It was "suggested" to them that no questions be addressed to the defense ministers prior to the start of the talks. After approximately a 90-minute, accompanied by unprecedented activity by service personnel which was incessantly wheeling in trolleys with tall glasses filled with wine, journalists were told on behalf of P. Grachev's aide in charge of relations with the public that they are "free" and can "work according to their own schedule."

The FRY Defense Ministry' communique for the press also notes that on the basis of the bilateral agreement on military cooperation signed in Moscow a year ago the Russian and Yugoslav defense ministers "agreed that relations between both countries need to be raised to a qualitatively new level." To this end it was deemed necessary "to intensify contacts at all levels between the defense ministers and the general staffs of Russia and Yugoslavia with a view to taking mutual interests into account." It is reported that the specific framework for military and military-economic cooperation will be regulated by a special plan.

Russia: Yeltsin's Planned Visits Abroad Remain in Force

LD0802130296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1228 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Andrey Surzhanskiy and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — "All the agreements on President Yeltsin's visits abroad remain in force and preparations are now under way for his trips to China and Norway," Presidential Press Secretary Sergey Medvedev told a briefing here today in reply to an ITAR-TASS query.

Medvedev added that it was yet premature to indicate the concrete dates of these visits because they are "still being negotiated".

Speaking about Chancellor Helmut Kohl's upcoming visit to Russia, the Presidential Press Secretary noted that it was a "planned visit". Medvedev recalled that President Yeltsin and Chancellor Kohl frequently exchanged views by telephone and, therefore, "there is nothing strange in the fact that Kohl is coming to Moscow on February 18". The Press Secretary added that the Russo-German summit talks would be held on February 19.

Medvedev also told the briefing that the schedule of the President's upcoming meetings included also a talk with Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund Michel Camdessus.

Russia: Sales of Another SU-27 Consignment to China Confirmed

LD0902104996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0955 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Stanislav Bychkov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Singapore, 9 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — At the end of last year Russia and China signed a contract to supply another consignment of SU-27 to the PRC, confirmed Eduard Neymark, head of the airspace department of the Russian Federation State Defense Committee, at a news conference here today. Neymark leads the Russian delegation at the Asia Airspace-96 show in Singapore. He did not specify how many planes are to be supplied.

Neymark believes this "will not lead to a disbalance of power" in the region. "A study carried out after the first consignment [of the aircraft], supplied in 1994, demonstrated that it did not distort the balance of forces and did not give rise to an arms race."

According to news received from Taipei, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan expressed "concern" about the Russian-Chinese deal. Eduard Neymark also said that Moscow and Beijing are now "discussing the possibility" of Russia providing China with a license to manufacture the SU-27.

Russia: Relief Supplies Airlifted to Quake Victims in China

LD0802204496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1825 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — The Il-76 plane belonging to the Russian Ministry for Emergency Situations left Krasnoyarsk for China at 17:11 p.m. Thursday, carrying tents to the victims of a devastating earthquake which hit the administrative center of the Chinese province of Yunan on Saturday.

On Saturday, another Russian plane will fly to China from Zhukovskiy airport in the suburbs of Moscow to deliver 6,000 blankets to the quake victims.

Russia: Primakov Receives Japanese Ambassador

LD0802130396 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1141 GMT 8 Feb 96

[ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Andrey Kirillov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 8 Apr (ITAR-TASS) — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov yesterday received Japanese Ambassador Koji Watanabe at his request.

During the meeting, they exchanged opinions on a number of bilateral and international political issues, the Russian Foreign Ministry told ITAR-TASS. Yevgeniy Primakov "spoke in favor of a further build-up of efforts to implement the strategy of the progressive development of Russian-Japanese relations." Koji Watanabe, for his part, emphasized Japan's unwavering support for Russia's reforms and for furthering the Russian-Japanese dialogue."

Russia: Soskovets on Japan as Russia's Strategic Partner

LD0802182996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1647 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — "Japan has always been Russia's strategic partner no matter what turn our relations might take on certain aspects," said first Vice-Premier of the Russian Government Oleg Soskovets at a meeting with the Japanese Ambassador to Moscow Koji Watanabe today.

Soskovets said that the plan suggested by Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto had been put into life in the relations between the two countries, adding that this is one of the most significant projects in the Russo-Japanese cooperation", ITAR-TASS learned from Soskovets' first aide Yuriy Mikhaylov.

Mikhaylov pointed out Japan's aspirations to make a concrete contribution to the development of the sector of industry and conversion in the Russian Far East, saying that in the near future, Russia would complete a list of projects connected with the reconstruction of oil processing enterprises, and creation of medical institutions in order to promote further development of relations with Japan.

Soskovets described as "encouraging" the development of trade and economic relations between Russia and Japan. In 1995, the overall trade turnover between the two countries reached six billion roubles, which exceeds the past level by 27 per cent.

For his part, the Japanese Ambassador reiterated that Japan was confident that the procedure of allocating credits issued in line of the Eximbank for the reconstruction of the oil processing plants in Jaroslavl and KAMAZ would be soon completed. In March, the construction of the Trans-Siberian communications network is expected to be completed. Progress has been made in the realization of a major deal between a number of Japanese companies and the Russian Oil Corporation "Lukoil." A projects is being finalized on the Japanese disbursement worth 500 million dollars for the development of the Russian Far East.

Both sides approved a proposal suggesting a meeting between co- chairman of the intergovernment commission for trade, economic and scientific cooperation between Russia and Japan.

Russia: Hwang Chang-yop Stresses DPRK, Russia Friendship

SK0802145396 Moscow Voice of Russia World Service in Korean 1200 GMT 7 Feb 96

[Interview with Hwang Chang-yop, secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers Party of Korea and chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly, with unidentified station reporter in Moscow; from the "Today's World" program — date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] An international seminar on the chuche idea for independence, peace, and international cooperation was held in Moscow for four days.

Attending the international seminar were delegates from 30 countries. The DPRK delegation was led by Hwang Chang-yop, secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers Party of Korea [WPK] and chairman of the DPRK Association of Social Scientists.

After the seminar, Secretary Hwang Chang-yop was interviewed by this station reporter. In the interview, he said:

[Begin Hwang recording] From the early days, I have had a very good impression of Moscow. As you may know, I worked as a researcher at Moscow University from 1949 to 1953. As such, I always think of the lives of the Russian people as well as Russia's culture, of the teachers at the graduate school in the university, and of the friends I studied with.

Our people have friendly feelings toward the Russian people. Thus, even from my personal point of view, I hope that friendly relations, that good traditional friendship between our two peoples, will continuously develop in the future. I also hope you will make efforts to help the friendly relations between our two countries to develop.

I came here not in the capacity of secretary of the party Central Committee and chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly [SPA], but as chairman of the Association of Social Scientists. According to diplomatic practice, when I visit and stay in a foreign country in the capacity of secretary for international affairs, I usually notify the host country of my visit. However, I have not come in the capacity of secretary for international affairs and as chairman of the SPA Foreign Affairs Committee, but as the chairman of the Association of Social Scientists. Thus, I did not notify the country of my visit, and when you requested an interview, I told you I have no special topics to discuss. However, as I thought that the meeting itself would be a joy, I accepted your request for this meeting.

As I mentioned earlier, the root of the DPRK people's friendly feelings toward the Russian people is very deep. Our people always think of how we can strengthen the friendship between our two countries, even under complex circumstances. Vicissitudes may occur in the course of historical development. However, it is necessary for our two peoples to jointly strive to strengthen the excellent, traditional friendship between our two countries. This is in compliance with the demand and interests of our two peoples. This is why I came here to meet you. [end recording]

Russia: Medvedev Calls Tajik Compromise Victory for Common Sense

LD0802130896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1244 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Andrey Surzhanskiy and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — Russia has played an essential role in moving the situation in Tajikistan out the deadlock, Russian President's spokesman Sergey Medvedev said on Thursday. The recent visit in Tajikistan of some Russian so-called "power-wielding ministers" practically led to a peaceful end in the confrontation between the mutineers and the government, he added.

The compromise reached in Tajikistan is not the victory of either of the sides, it is the victory of a common sense, Medvedev told a briefing in the Kremlin for Russian and foreign journalists.

He stressed that the main demand of the rebels was satisfied. President Emomali Rakhmanov of Tajikistan replaced three high- ranking government officials, thus making a step to prevent a full- scale war.

"Tajikistan was virtually on the brink of a civil war, and the republic could have ceased to exist if divided", Yeltsin's spokesman said.

"There are forces in the republic, interested in pushing the president to power methods", according to Medvedev who did not elaborate.

Special hopes are pinned on the Forum of the peoples of Tajikistan, scheduled at the recent meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States' leaders, Medvedev told the briefing, adding that "it is this forum, which can mark the beginning of the settlement of the situation in Tajikistan".

Speaking on talks with Tajik opposition, Medvedev said that the official Dushanbe showed goodwill in continuing peace negotiations after the other side failed to fulfil its ceasefire obligations.

Russia: Admiral Kasatonov on Purpose of Mediterranean Mission

LD0802234796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2330 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — Russian naval ships have sailed to the Mediterranean "to demonstrate once again after a certain interval our capability and remind everyone that we are willing and capable of defending national interests at sea," Deputy Commander of the Russian Navy Admiral Igor Kasatonov stated in a message Thursday to the Chief Navy Staff.

Kasatonov heads a multi-purpose naval group on a special training mission in the Mediterranean. The group includes the North Fleet flagship — the new heavy aircraft-carrying cruiser Admiral Nikolay Kuznetsov.

Kasatonov said that for the first time in Russian history the flights of a multi-purpose air wing are being rehearsed by interceptors, ground attack aircraft, anti-sub and rescue helicopters.

Aces now fly in pairs and groups and when the exercises are over, full scale air combat will be simulated, the admiral announced.

Simultaneously war ships are working on their own programs. The command of the group is also learning, Kasatonov said. "The North Fleet now acts as the staff of the former Mediterranean naval squadron. We are also learning to control the powerful multi-purpose formation from the central command post of the navy", he announced.

Already now four planes can be launched with an interval of 10-15 seconds from the new cruiser, which means the Russian navy is no worse than the Americans with their catapults, the admiral said.

He added that at the initiative of U.S. counterparts which the group contacted in the Mediterranean, the two sides have held talks, exchanged delegations and conducted maneuvers.

Russia: Poland's Rosati on Bilateral Ties, Primakov Visit

LD0802222696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2021 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Aleksandr Potyomkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] WARSAW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — Poland's entrance of the European Union and NATO remains a priority in its foreign policy, Dariusz Rosati, the Polish foreign minister in the renewed government, said [to] ITAR-TASS today.

However, he added, permanent improvement of relations with neighbouring countries, including Russia, is of paramount importance for Poland. Rosati said membership of NATO is a sovereign affair of Poland and the Western alliance, but Russia "should not be ignored". It would be utterly uncautious of Poland to enter anti-Russia alliances, Rosati told reporters.

Polish politicians will try to persuade Russia that Poland's entrance of NATO "is in a certain sense to interests of Russia" as it would mean both a stage in the evolution of the European security system and change of the nature of NATO itself.

The Polish-Russian relations have been incomplete over the recent years in that dynamism of economic contacts did not coexist with political contacts, Rosati said. Poland wants political dialogue with Russia, he continued, adding that it would be difficult to carry on the dialogue "in the language of stereotypes" in the stead of direct contacts, Rosati said.

He said he had sent an invitation to Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov to visit Poland in March. The major Russo-Polish meetings of this year are the visit of Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski to Moscow, due in April, and of the Polish prime minister in the autumn.

Russia: New Ambassador Appointed to Cameroon, Guinea

MM0802130096 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Official"]

[FBIS Translated Text] By edicts of the Russian Federation president

Vitaliy Yakovlevich Litvin has been relieved of his duties as Russian Federation ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Republic of Cameroon and the Republic of Equatorial Guinea in connection with his reassignment.

Yevgeniy Alekseyevich Utkin has been appointed Russian Federation ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Republic of Cameroon and the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Opens Presidential Council Meeting

LD0902092696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0757 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 9 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — A sitting of the Presidential Council opened in the Kremlin at 1000 this morning, chaired by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Opening the sitting, which is being attended by all members of the council as well as four experts, Boris Yeltsin voiced his regret that "four of our friends and comrades-in-arms on the Presidential Council" have left the body. Noting that "that is a matter for their consciences, their way of seeing Russia's problems and solving them, and their moral credo," Boris Yeltsin said at the same time that Yegor Gaydar, Sergey Kovalev, Sergey Alekseyev, and Otto Latsis left the Presidential Council "at such a difficult period for Russia."

Turning to ways of settling the Chechen problem, Boris Yeltsin recalled that the subject was discussed in detail at Wednesday's sitting of Russia's Security Council. "The Chechen problem cannot be resolved at a single stroke, merely by Nemtsov's collecting signatures to show that people do not want war," Boris Yeltsin stressed. "Neither I nor the the military want war, the whole population does not want it, and the world does not want it. A billion signatures could be collected worldwide, but if Nemtsov were to suggest how to settle the conflict in Chechnya, how to do that technically and organizationally, I should be grateful to him. But the million signatures he has collected do not propose any solution," Boris Yeltsin observed. He recalled that seven options for settling the Chechen problem were put forward at the Security Council meeting, and that one of them would ultimately be selected.

The Presidential Council meeting continued behind closed doors, but, as several council members pointed out on the previous day, in addition to discussing the problem of Chechnya, Boris Yeltsin will probably consult the members of the council about whether or not he should stand for a second term. It is known that Boris Yeltsin intends to declare his final decision on 15 February during his trip to Yekaterinburg.

Russia: Yeltsin Dissolves Human Rights Commission

MK0802140096 Moscow OBSHCHAYA GAZETA in Russian No. 5, 8-14 Feb 96 (signed to press 7 Feb 1996) p 8

[Report by Maksim Glikin: "The Kremlin Will Get By Without Human Rights Activists"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The main condition for the Russian Federation's admission to the Council of Europe was its commitment to advance even more resolutely toward a rule-of-law state.

And the movement has begun. The first move in this direction was Edict No. 117 of the Russian Federation president entitled "Matters Concerning the Russian Federation Presidential Staff," whereby the Human Rights Commission under the president, chaired by Sergey Kovalev, has been effectively abolished. There was apparently no room in the reorganized staff for the only official structure which was directly responsible for defending the Russian people's rights and freedoms. In the end, the de facto unemployed human rights activists demonstratively resigned en masse.

They could have worked a little more. Under Edict No. 117, a Main Administration on Constitutional Guarantees of Citizens' Rights was formed. But the presidential staff's departments and subdivisions of which it is composed have nothing to do with the functions of the former Kovalev commission. These include the State Decorations Service; the Commission on State Prizes; the Commission on Women, the Family, and Demography; and the Citizenship Administration (the head of which, Mr. Mikitayev, was recently fired following disclosures in the press, including OBSHCHAYA GAZETA). These services have never taken a particular interest in human rights.

It needs to be recognized that Sergey Kovalev's high commission itself rather recalled a decorative plant placed near the window to Europe: It could not seriously impact on the human rights situation by definition. Its establishment three weeks after the storming of the White House was perceived by many as the president's black joke. The commission was only allowed to gather information, send recommendations to the responsible organizations, and annually report to the president on the human rights situation. It was stated at a recent press conference devoted to the commission's mass resignation that none of its specific proposals was ever implemented. During its two years of work the commission has not even once met with the president in its full composition, while its chairman was only twice granted an audience with the guarantor of constitutional rights and freedoms of the Russian people, and even then on matters other than human rights.

True, Kovalev's position was dubious from the start. He also had the post of human rights commissioner, but he received it as part of a package, an advance, while the Duma rejected a corresponding law. Sergey Adamovich [Kovalev] was "under-commissioned" for a long time and could only open the eyes of the world public to the horrors of the Chechen war and circulate open letters to all official addresses in Russia and Europe. After the deputies "pulled" Kovalev from the package, the line in the Constitution on the institution of the Commissioner for Human Rights also became purely rhetorical.

True, apart from prominent members, the Kovalev commission also contained (and, incidentally, they are still there) 23 "apparatchiks." These people were quite content with the theory of minor deeds. They provided practical legal assistance to citizens in distress: Queries and appeals on stamped presidential staff paper were never left without a response. Recently, however, under a presidential executive order, the commission staff was reassigned to the Administration on Citizens' Appeals, which was soon abolished. And although formally these people have not as yet been dismissed, they have no doubt that they will soon see their names on the list of the 500 "lucky ones" whom Kremlin chief of staff Nikolay Yegorov was entrusted with discharging. The first bureaucratic call has already come: Newspapers are no longer delivered to them. The newly established Main Administration on Constitutional Guarantees of Citizens' Rights will apparently have no use for the experience of these people and other human rights activists.

Kovalev has already received a letter from Yeltsin saying that the president reacted to his resignation "with understanding." This is logical: The tactful Sergey Adamovich continued to nominally head the commission even after Edict No. 117. And when he left, only one undivided guarantor of citizens' rights and freedoms remained in Russia — Boris Yeltsin. It seems, though, that the warranty of the Constitution adopted two years ago has already expired and human rights need no longer be defended.

Russia: Human Rights Groups Deny Yeltsin Confidence

MK0802135896 Moscow OBSHCHAYA GAZETA in Russian
No. 4, 8-14 Feb 96 (Signed to press 7 Feb) p 2

[OBSHCHAYA GAZETA own information: "Dissidents Deny President Confidence"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Twenty-five human rights groups and organizations in eighteen regions of Russia have sent an open letter to President Yeltsin. Talking with an OBSHCHAYA GAZETA correspondent, one of the authors of the letter, Larisa Bogoraz, said that the human rights activists accuse Boris Yeltsin of betrayal of democratic ideals. The human rights activists place on the president the responsibility for the death of thousands of people in Chechnya and for the fact that, when taking important decisions, he proceeds from lying information provided to him by his immediate circle. He is also accused of the fact that this entourage is formed in accordance with the principle of personal loyalty to Boris Yeltsin — in the view of the human rights activists, the president is currently busy "constructing a provincial oblast party committee." The authors of the letter notified Boris Yeltsin that they would most certainly vote against him in the presidential election and would call on their fellow citizens to do likewise.

Russia: Medvedev Gives Briefing on Current Issues

LD0802232496 Moscow INTERFAX in English
2311 GMT 8 Feb 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: No 26 (1019)]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sergey Medvedev, spokesman for President Boris Yeltsin, held a news briefing for Russian and foreign correspondents on current political issues. Such meetings are expected to be held on a weekly basis.

On ways of resolving the Chechen crisis, he said the Russian president would never be a man to beg Dudayev for peace.

Medvedev said there was a heated debate on Chechnya as the national security council met in Moscow on Wednesday. "All I's are still to be dotted, and work is under way to try to set out a policy towards Chechnya," he said.

He said the president was prepared to sign any deal on Russian pullout from Chechnya, but at what cost?

The spokesman said those who are behind the petitioning campaign for troop withdrawals from Chechnya must realize that if Russian soldiers withdrew, the

Chechen militants would target their weapons on their own people.

Other questions to be asked, he said, are as follows: What will the situation be like in Chechnya if the rebels alone stay put there? How will the Cossacks behave in Chechnya and in the adjacent Stavropol territory? What sort of storms will shake Dagestan after that?

The spokesman does not believe Dudayev himself will be able to hold to power only by fanning up the military-nationalist hysteria.

In response to "some hotheads calling for a military solution to the conflict, he said Yeltsin would never agree to "scorched earth tactics."

The spokesman denied allegations of Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's possible resignation. He spoke of holding a conversation with the prime minister on Wednesday who told Medvedev of agreeing his leave with the president. He warned against dramatizing "the simple event."

The spokesman said Yeltsin was firm on strict monitoring of payment of wages.

He said the president was aware the culprits must be sought not only in the regions but also in Moscow, namely within the finance and economics ministries. "Their names are known and the president will take a just decision soon," the spokesman said.

He quoted Yeltsin as saying it will be possible to speak in terms of some results in resolving the thorny issue of pay delays already in March. Medvedev said special supervisory commissions were at work in Moscow and on the ground to track down how long it takes for the money to get from Moscow to the regions.

He said the Russian president was scheduled to meet Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany on February 19, a day after he arrives in Moscow.

Yeltsin also plans a meeting with IMF Executive Director Michel Camdessou and preparations are under way for his visits to China and Norway.

"Yeltsin's visit to Ukraine will be held as soon as the last details of the Black Sea Fleet problem have been resolved. This is the task of the defense ministers on both sides, " Medvedev said.

On Tajikistan, the spokesman pointed to the great role Russia had played in initiating a peaceful solution to the latest crisis there.

He said the republic withdrew from the brink of civil war following a recent visit there by Russia's force ministers.

Medvedev said the concessions President Emomali Rakhmanov had made was "also a step helping to avert the war."

The peaceful solution to the conflict, he said, has helped bring closer the idea of calling a popular forum of Tajikistan as envisaged by last month's CIS summit decision. Medvedev said the forum could mark the start of a shift away from war to a negotiated settlement in Tajikistan.

Russia: Yeltsin Dismisses Foreign Economic Bank Head

LD0802190296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1838 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin issued a decree by which Anatoliy Nosko had been relieved of his post of the chairman of the Vnesheconombank (Foreign economic bank) in connection with the transfer to another job, the press service of the head of the Russian state reported.

Russia: Yeltsin Seen Trying To Please Ural Authorities

MM0802201196 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 9 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Aleksandr Pashkov: "In Yekaterinburg the President Will Say What Everybody Already Knows"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Yeltsin will arrive in Yekaterinburg on the evening of 13 February. It is believed that he will visit his father's grave. Then he will take a trip on the Yekaterinburg subway. He will meet with representatives of the heads of the city and oblast administrations. He will hold a roundtable meeting of editors of leading Urals newspapers at the Press Center, and he will wind up the visit on Tuesday with a meeting with the city public at the Palace of Youth.

According to various unofficial statements, nobody is in any doubt that Yeltsin will announce his decision to run for president again. At any rate, the president's representative in Yekaterinburg has said that many groups in support of the presidential elections have been formed in the city and oblast, and they will officially proclaim their existence after 14 February. Governor Eduard Rossel is flying out to Moscow. He is expected to meet with Yeltsin 9 February.

Interestingly, the chairman of the Sverdlovsk state television company, whose dismissal Rossel had been seeking right from the time of his election, was removed on the eve of the visit. Several months ago the chairman was treated with affection by the Russian leadership, yet all of a sudden he has quite unexpectedly been removed on what are unique grounds in Russia — "professional bankruptcy." This victory for Rossel can indicate only one thing: Yeltsin is bending over backward to please the Urals authorities in order to secure the support in the proposed presidential race of the powerful Russian region from which all the indications are that, as is now traditional, he will launch his progress toward the presidency.

The December elections to the State Duma are also evidence in favor of this. Although left-wing forces won in Yeltsin's birthplace — Galitskiy rayon — this was probably a narrow victory. Centrist forces — "Russia Is Our Home," "Transformation of the Fatherland," and the Yavlinskiy and Gaydar blocs — won in Yekaterinburg and other major cities in the oblast. The Communists and the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] won few votes. No CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] candidate was elected on the list in Sverdlovsk Oblast. Effectively it was confirmed that the Central Urals are among the regions where left-wing forces are weakest. And this is certainly being taken into account by the president's team.

Interestingly, a powerful sociological group worked in the oblast ahead of the December elections at the commission of the Presidential Staff, which apparently then attempted to extrapolate the situation to the whole of Russia. And Yeltsin's permission to hold elections of Russia's first governor precisely in his birthplace was given with an eye to the future: Rossel's earlier dismissal had adversely affected the president's image. The mistake was corrected. In time, as we can see.

Russia: Yeltsin Discusses Presidential Elections

LD0802153596 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1400 GMT 8 Feb 96

[Video report by correspondent S. Zenin; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of state met with the governors of Russia's regions and republics today. [video shows Yeltsin meeting with governors]

According to the President's press service, Boris Yeltsin assembled the heads of administrations in order to discuss the results of the socioeconomic development of the territories and regions of Russia in 1995. At the meeting the president spoke about strengthening the federal executive authority both in the center and in the regions of Russia. The heads of administrations were given the relevant instructions.

Journalists had an opportunity to put several questions to the president. Rumors that yesterday's Security Council meeting was in part devoted to problems concerning the crisis in Chechnya were confirmed by Boris Yeltsin today. The president said that seven ways of halting the war were worked out. A special working group has already been set up under the leadership of Viktor Chernomyrdin. The group has been given two weeks for organizational questions. [video cuts to show Yeltsin speaking to journalists]

[Begin Yeltsin recording] We have given them two weeks, two weeks to sort themselves out. Then we shall have a meeting and shall finally decide what we are to do. It is necessary to find a compromise which will suit everybody, including the people of Chechnya. You understand that if troops were withdrawn there would be total slaughter throughout Chechnya. If the troops are not withdrawn there is no point in my going for the presidency and the elections. The people would not elect me — there is criticism. [end recording]

Replying to a question about the forthcoming elections, Boris Yeltsin said that he has not yet spoken about this with people from his home region of Yekaterinburg. He intends to do this next week.

[Begin Yeltsin recording] I intend to do this on the 15th [February]. This is the date that I promised I shall announce my decision whether or not to run for election. I have decided to announce this not in Moscow but in Yekaterinburg, on the 15th. [end recording]

It became known today that Boris Yeltsin will leave for Yekaterinburg probably in the evening of 13 February. Afterwards, the Russian president intends to visit Chelyabinsk.

Russia: Presidential Council Favors Yeltsin Nomination

LD0902120696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1158 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — All members of the Presidential Council without exception "spoke in favour of my running for presidency for the second term," President Yeltsin told Tass today before the beginning of his meeting with heads of local administrations of the regions and territories of Russia.

According to Yeltsin, every member of the Presidential Council, who attended today's meeting in the Kremlin, put forward his own arguments, explaining why Yeltsin should do it, taking into account both the political and economic situation in the country.

Yeltsin pointed out that interesting suggestions concerning the forthcoming elections had been made at the meeting of the Presidential Council. Members of the Council spoke a lot about the way the electoral campaign should be organized and, as Yeltsin said, they stressed that he should not attack his opponents and criticise them.

Russia: Premier Explains Decision To Back Yeltsin

MM0802153396 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 9 Feb 96 p 1

[Interview with Russian Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin by IZVESTIYA observer Vasiliy Kononenko; place and date not given: "Premier Chernomyrdin's Choice: Yeltsin Should Stay President. Government Chairman Answers IZVESTIYA Observer's Questions" — first three paragraphs are IZVESTIYA introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] At an extended session of the NDR ["Russia Is Our Home"] movement's council on 8 February, in which deputies from the NDR faction in the State Duma also took part, the premier made an official statement to the effect that he renounces participation in the presidential elections, in favor of the president. V. Chernomyrdin stressed that he will give his personal assistance to B. Yeltsin in conducting a strong election campaign, and called on all NDR structures to join in the campaign.

The debates on this at the council did not last long. There were virtually no objections to the NDR leader's refusal to join the contest for the presidency. The council members decided to convene a congress of the movement in March to give its "blessing" to a plan envisaging the mobilization of all its organizations in support of the president, and they also elected a new chairman of the NDR Executive Committee. He is V. Babichev, who hitherto held the post of leader of the government apparatus.

Thus V. Chernomyrdin is leaving the field of open political battle. Why did he make this choice? IZVESTIYA observer Vasiliy Kononenko asked the premier a few questions.

[Kononenko] Viktor Stepanovich, are you not making a mistake in renouncing participation in the presidential elections? After all, some political scientists have claimed that your "temporary" participation in the election campaign alongside B. Yeltsin would not only bring in additional funds, but would also help to win over a considerable proportion of the electorate from the "left."

[Chernomyrdin] I don't think there is any mistake here. I have very carefully studied the experience of election campaigns in other countries in recent years. Nowhere has the doubling up of candidates who uphold and pursue one and the same political and strategic line led to success. If one of the candidates has ultimately won the victory, it has been at the cost of an excessive strain on all forces and resources. Why should we do what has been done before? Why fragment the electorate and cause confusion? The president still has a very substantial political potential. The strong qualities, the strong points that Boris Nikolayevich has in plenty have not gone away. And it will all come out. And very soon. How and when is a question of concrete election campaign tactics. Both the president himself and his whole team must do a lot of serious work on that.

I have my own tasks here too. In general terms they could be described thus: to structure the government's work in such a way as to ensure unfailing continuity and continuation of the course of market reforms and the strengthening of the young Russian democracy.

[Kononenko] In the parliamentary elections only some 10 percent of voters voted for the "party of power," which is how society regards the NDR movement. What do you think, does the president have a chance of more support, especially in the context of the continuing war in Chechnya?

[Chernomyrdin] I don't think the NDR electorate, for all its diversity, coincides with the wide range of electoral sympathies that characterize the president's supporters. By his nature as a political figure Boris Nikolayevich unites the interests of the most diverse social, professional, and democratic groups of the Russian population. I would say that his leadership is an expression of the idea of social peace, civil accord, which Russia so badly needs today. Let me note that that applies to Chechnya too. Both the president and the government are in favor of the speediest resolution of the crisis by means of a peaceful settlement. And we are striving to do everything to achieve that.

[Kononenko] Both in society and in the power structures there is evidence of a fear of revanche by the "left," although in December they won the votes of approximately 28 percent of the voters. Obviously this factor dictated the personnel changes in the government and the appearance of edicts on increasing stipends and other social payments. In this connection some economists are predicting a departure from a strict budget policy and even a danger of an upsurge in inflation after the elections. Do you share these misgivings?

[Chernomyrdin] I will tell you quite definitely: I reject all populism. And I will not tolerate it while I am head of government. But I see it as my main duty and my main obligation to ensure that my fellow citizens experience a change for the better in daily life as early as this year. The potential for that is inherent in the economic policy we are pursuing. The main thing is not to allow its core — the federal budget approved for 1996 — to be destroyed or shaken.

Russia: NDR Reaction to Premier's Refusal 'Mixed'

LD0802151196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1439 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — Members of the council of Our Home is Russia (NDR) movement gave a mixed and somewhat critical reaction regarding the categorical refusal of Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin to run for the Russian presidency and instead to offer the party's support to Boris Yeltsin's bid for a second term as president.

Two members of the council publicly expressed their disagreement with the movement's position.

Chairman of the Union of Russia's Land Owners Vladimir Bashmachnikov, who was elected to the State Duma on the NDR party list, expressed doubt that NDR members will conduct the presidential campaign as actively as during the December parliamentary elections.

Bashmachnikov said he joined "a party of professionals-managers" hoping that it would assist in the birth of the middle class, but the organization has changed its face.

According to Duma deputy Lyudmila Naruseva, wife of St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoly Sobchak, "The NDR movement switched its course as on a railway track, and actually placed a new leader at the head of the movement, but not the one for whom people voted in December." Naruseva described Chernomyrdin's refusal to run for the presidency as unprecedented behavior in Russia's modern history, when "a man refuses to take the office which he deserves and should take."

Naruseva voiced two unconditional demands as preconditions for NDR participation in the campaign on Yeltsin's nomination: fulfillment of all pre-election promises and a settlement of the war in Chechnya.

Many of the trump cards held by the movement during the parliamentary election campaign will be knocked out of the party's hands during the upcoming presidential campaign, in particular concerning its special position on the war in Chechnya.

Several participants of the session who preferred to remain anonymous told INTERFAX that they are considering the issue on suspending their participation or leaving the movement due to the movement's decision to support Yeltsin's candidacy at the upcoming elections.

Russia: Zyuganov: Russia Never To Be 'Junior Partner' of U.S.

AU0902124896 Hamburg DIE ZEIT in German 9 Feb 96 p 8

[Article by Gennadiy A. Zyuganov, chairman of the Communist Party of Russia: "The Right to One's Own Path"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow — The U.S. press often claims that Russia's communists are basically opposed to any reforms and also to the United States — even though the Communist Party of the Russian Federation was formed as a reform party 10 years ago to oppose the decades of stagnation and Mikhail Gorbachev's desire for a revolution.

While the West sang hallelujah for perestroyka, we knew that revolution has always had painful consequences in Russia. Therefore, we called for a revolutionary reform, which was in harmony with Russian traditions and worldwide developments. Unfortunately, no one listened to us, and the Soviet Union collapsed.

Boris Yeltsin's regime tried — without consideration for losses — to bring the "blessings" of neo-liberalism to Russia, whose economy and national character are so different from those in the West. The results were fateful.

The GNP and the standard of living have declined dramatically. Yeltsin's promises to raise social expenditures and to improve living conditions are pure election maneuvers. We intend to reestablish the power of the Russian state and its reputation in the world. This would make Russian policy far more predictable and responsible than it is today. We will try to renew the unique role of our state as a pivotal point of a Eurasian continental bloc — and thus also create the necessary balance between East and West.

We consider the destruction of the military and strategic balance, which was caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union, to be extremely dangerous. And we consider the reestablishment of the union of the former Soviet peoples — based on voluntary association — to be a historical necessity, which corresponds to Russia's needs and the world's desire for security.

We will let ourselves be guided by pragmatism and free foreign policy of that ideology that imposes on it ruinous deeds and obligations. We reject fantasies about the "international revolution" but we think that the "new world order" is just as detrimental to Russian interests. We will strictly adhere to universal moral principles and to the norms of international law.

Above all, however, we will concentrate on the internal healing and the national rebirth of Russia. Foreign policy, which serves this goal, will concentrate on protecting national security. This rules out, however, being in international organizations that claim the right to intervene in the internal affairs of other states.

That is also why we reject NATO's plans to expand to the east to the Russian border. We see the use of NATO troops in the former Yugoslavia as the first step to implement these dangerous plans.

Russia is against superfluous and excessive military expenditures, but it has never been and will never be the United States' "junior partner." Any policy that is speculating on Russia remaining in its currently shameful situation is doomed to failure.

We respect the democratic tradition of the United States and its extraordinary successes. We are very much interested in expanding economic cooperation and cooperation in the fields of education, science, and culture. We are willing to make guarantees for investments and to establish better opportunities for investments.

We recognize the unique nature of the U.S. experiment, but we also claim the right to follow a path that corresponds to our traditions and conditions. The principle of variety, on which the United States has founded its domestic policy so successfully, should also characterize U.S. foreign policy.

Russia: UCP-CPSU Urges Single Communist Candidate

MM0602145196 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 6 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Valentina Nikiforova: "Such Desirable Unity. UCP-CPSU Plenum"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The statement of the United Communist Party-CPSU [UCP-CPSU] Political Executive Committee Council is brief, just one page long, but in importance it ranks alongside a major conference. It contains two provisions. The first: The UCP-CPSU Political Executive Committee Council urges Communists and all patriots to support the Communist Party of the Russian Federation [CPRF] Central Committee Plenum's decision on the nomination of Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the most organized party, as a contender for the Russian presidency. The second is to support the Russian Communists' striving for organizational unification and the creation of a single Communist Party of Russia and calls for this question to be examined at forthcoming conferences and plenums of the Communist Parties' Central Committees.

It was a usual working session. Except that the tone of the discussion was more business-like. The participants strenuously avoided empty logomachy and this inspires confidence in the coordinating organ. And the correctly chosen line — support for everything constructive within the Communist Parties — will bring the common goal — the recreation of a united, just state — closer. This is quite realistic. When assessing the stage reached, [UCP-CPSU] chairman O. Shenin noted:

"In recent years all the Communist parties have surmounted quite a few difficult hurdles although not all were cleared as they might have been..."

There are some bitter examples here. And even if you really want to celebrate the Communists' successes in Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia can you be happy with the defeats in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan? Can you forget that your Baltic comrades are languishing in jail and that at every party meeting statements are adopted in defense of A. Rubiks, M. Burokevicius, J. Jermalavicius, and I. Kucherov and all the rest who remained honest and loyal to the ideals of the socialist state, the great state?

There are questions to be asked in Russia itself — only one-third of the voters voted for the Communists.

"In the presidential elections all the Communists and people's patriotic forces must unite and field a single candidate," O. Shenin said, summing up.

This is no easy task because people have still not grasped the full danger of the other options. At the same time it must be borne in mind that there will be several hurdles in the elections. In Estonia, for example, just two electoral precincts opened 17 December and the number of scheduled bus services was halved. Not all the voters were able to stand out in waiting lines several kilometers long and only one-fourth of those who wanted to vote did so. That is how the Estonian and Russian Governments and the "great democrat" A. Sobchak combined forces even though they were supposed to ensure all the necessary conditions for voting.

They have learned how to wreck things. E. Shevardnadze, another "democrat," created four parties in Georgia: three Communist, one Socialist. He can do whatever he likes. And as a result the Communist candidate did not become president.

Workers' solidarity should help out here: It confirms that the Communist Party is the party of the working people. Work among labor collectives, unfortunately, remains a pipedream. And without mass support the regime cannot be overcome.

"I took 58 percent of the vote, in some regions 92 percent, but according to the official figures I got just 24.4 percent. And as a result A. Akayev became president," A. Masaliyev, leader of the Kyrgyzstan Communists, said. "Our observers were crudely excluded and the international observers are working for the regime. There is another point here. Before the elections A. Akayev met with B. Yeltsin, this was widely shown on television. And the people remain sympathetic toward Russia."

"There is one solution: Summon up all your courage, unite, and ensure victory for the CPRF candidate," A. Tulebayev from Kazakhstan urged. "And our republic will become closer to Russia. Overcome your ambitions! It is not our decision to make but we support Zyuganov!" he announced.

Russia: Primakov Promises Better Defense of Interests

LD0802204996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1845 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — Russia will more actively defend its national interests than before, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov told the parliamentary committee for international affairs Thursday.

He explained that Russia will do this to prevent a drift towards to new confrontation and a return to the cold war times.

"Russia will do its best to prevent such a drift and confrontation from prevailing in the relations between states, Primakov said.

Speaking on Russian relations with the West, Primakov pointed out "large areas of matching interests."

These areas include "the fight against international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and extremism which sometimes comes in a religious form," he said.

At the same time, Primakov urged for "defending Russia's national interests if they do not match those of the West, but in civilized and non-confrontational forms which would prevent a drift to the cold war times."

Primakov described as "primitive and untrue" the speculations by some western politicians "who speak about Moscow's imperial habits, the restoration of the former Soviet Union in its previous form and loss of sovereignty gained by the former Soviet republics."

"The former Soviet Union was a unitary state," Primakov recalled. "We are not pushing for a unitary state like that and we will never come to have it again," he added.

Russia: Stroyev on Regions' Major Role in Reforms

MM0902114496 Moscow TRUD in Russian 8 Feb 96 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Yegor Stroyev, chairman of the Federation Council, by TRUD Political Observer Vitaliy Golovachev; place and date not given: "Yegor Stroyev: 'The Regions Will Not Tolerate Upheavals in Russia.' Abandonment of the Reforms Would Be a Big Mistake, But the Course Must Be Corrected" — first three paragraphs are TRUD introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yegor Stroyev is distinguished by a sober and, it may be said, a thoroughly pragmatic approach to the processes taking place in our life. Clearly he was that kind of man in the past when he was an oblast committee secretary and a Politburo member, and he remains true to that principle today as governor of Orel Oblast and chairman of the Federation Council.

Stroyev, a doctor of sciences, author of many books on current economic problems, president of the "Chernozemye" ["Black Earth"] association, and governor of Orel Oblast, began the reforms in his region back in the "perestroyka" years and is continuing them to this day. Boris Nemtsov, a man you could never suspect of being a conservative or a toady, recently gave an extremely high assessment of Stroyev's proreform efforts.

Parliamentarians voted with a strikingly rare unanimity for Stroyev's appointment as leader of the upper house. This rather short, somewhat tubby, quiet man is supported by the Russia Is Our Home [NDR] bloc and the Communists. How has he managed to form a kind of "bridge" between forces at the opposite poles of sociopolitical life? "Perhaps," my interlocutor replied, smiling, "it's all because throughout these years I did not argue with politicians but got down to concrete work using scientific approaches and common sense as my guide...". Meanwhile, the "consumer basket" [of 19 representative foodstuffs] in Orel Oblast is among the cheapest in the country when compared with the other regions of Russia. A Federation Council member put it to me like this: "We supported Stroyev because of his objectivity, his intelligence, his professionalism, and his emphasis not on confrontation but on accord. Those are the qualities that we need most of all today...".

[Golovachev] Yegor Semenovich, with whom do you feel the greatest affinity — the Communists or NDR? The doctrine connected with the past or "normal social democracy"?

[Stroyev] I would steer clear of all these "-isms," ideological stereotypes, and "labels." The issue after all is not one of names — capitalism, socialism, or democracy.... The important thing is that people live well and the country prospers. That is why my answer is this: I feel closest affinity to the people, the Russians, their burdens and deprivations.... The most important thing is the search for the optimum policy of economic and social changes.

These problems have been of concern to me for several decades now. I will never abandon to anyone else my quest or my concern for problems of reforming the economy because I have learned these things the hard way, these are my views of life and my vision of what is happening in society and the country.

I was and remain a fierce supporter of effective, thorough, and well-considered reforms. I support those who are implementing them.

[Golovachev] They say that the president's side also supported your candidacy for the chairmanship of the Federation Council. Describe your relations with Boris Nikolayevich.

[Stroyev] Our personal relations have always been normal and good — they date back to the days when Boris Nikolayevich worked in the Urals. Then he went to Moscow and became involved in construction work while I remained in Orel and dealt with agriculture. Two of the most difficult areas of work.... Then I came to the capital and we worked together resolving complex questions, and this united us too. We have met quite often recently....

[Golovachev] Did you and the president discuss your candidacy for the chairmanship of the upper chamber?

[Stroyev] There was no direct suggestion of that kind — it would not have been very proper for us to discuss this question.

[Golovachev] What is your attitude to the presidential form of power in Russia?

[Stroyev] I firmly advocate — and I have repeatedly stressed this — a strong Russian state with a presidential branch of power. There has always been an authoritative central power in Russia — both in past centuries and in modern times. The presidency today is an organic part of the structure of state administration. I also advocate the building of a normal federal state with a center and regional organs of power where functions are divided between them by law.

[Golovachev] The leaders of the regions fervently support the idea of budget federalism. How do you view this problem?

[Stroyev] The principle of federalism must be implemented not on paper but in real life. Here is a concrete example. Taxes and payments currently being levied in the regions are sent to Moscow, and the capital then returns a small proportion of that money "in dribs and drabs" — but only after protracted petitioning, time spent waiting in line, and interminable "paperwork." As a result many regions do not receive their due and are reduced to starvation rations. Some 85 percent of them now are dependent on subsidies, mainly because money is being taken from them. Let us clearly determine how much should be given to the center and how much should be left in the regions and let us stop sending the money backward and forward. We will cut the subsidies to the regions many times over as a result and say to them: It is all in your hands now, do not expect any more cash injections, learn how to manage your affairs efficiently.... The implementation of the principles of real federalism will be useful both to the center (it will cure many of its headaches), the regions, and the state as a whole.

[Golovachev] If it is not a secret, what did you discuss with the president during your recent meeting? Did you deal with economic issues?

[Stroyev] Of course. For example, I said that the dismantling of the old political system and the old economic relations is now complete, but the period of economic restructuring has not yet begun in earnest. This requires hard and painstaking daily work. There is a vital need for specialists, professionals who know what to do and how to do it, and who know to turn a minus into a plus. This is the most difficult thing and this is where things have stalled in our country.

Today new ties are developing from among the apparent and real chaos — not ties based on edict and directive but natural ties reflecting the interests of enterprises and people. Yes, many mafia structures have developed, there is a lot of corruption and a lot of dirty money, but sound principles are clearly becoming stronger. They must be supported too.

[Golovachev] The Chechen war is one of the most acute and painful problems. What way out do you see here? Do you agree with the idea of withdrawing the troops from Chechnya?

[Stroyev] In my view there is one solution: To end the war with the help of the Chechens themselves. I believe that one of the main stabilizing factors in Chechnya today is the legitimate election and prestige of Doku Zavgayev. The Chechens must reach agreement among themselves. In other words, all of the very acute contradictions today should be resolved by way of an inter-Chechen dialogue. And we must all do our utmost to promote that process. The Chechen war must be ended as quickly as possible. There isn't a single normal person in the country today who does not want peace....

[Golovachev] You have repeatedly talked about the need for an adjustment of the reforms, but what do you have in mind? Not a rejection of the reforms altogether?

[Stroyev] Even Yegor Gaydar stated recently that the course of the reforms needs correcting.... Yes, this is indeed necessary. However, I want to be absolutely clear on this: It is as clear as day that it would be a big mistake to abandon the reforms, ownership, and the move forward.... We should not abruptly alter the strategy of the reforms but we must adjust them. The sooner the better.

I would highlight several main areas. First, the protection of national commodity producers (this happens in all civilized countries, by the way). Second, the creation of the kind of economic conditions which would encourage investments in production and change the flows of finance. Third, increased social protection for the needy. Fourth, real support for small and medium enterprise especially in the sphere of production (this approach has greatly helped Sweden, Germany, and other countries to overcome the postwar economic deadlock and chaos).

Furthermore, over the past five years I have resolved for myself many of the problems that are being discussed in society today....

[Golovachev] What do you mean?

[Stroyev] These are questions connected with ownership, privatization, the land, the multiparty system, and so forth. These problems do not plague or torment me today because the answer is clear.

In the last 5-year period in Orel Oblast we began working on ways to forge a closer link between the peasant and the worker and the results of their labor and how to increase their interest in it. The collective contract, leasing, private farming — we embarked on all these things under the old system. And incidentally we achieved good results — the oblast is Russia's leader in terms of per capita milk production, first and second for meat and grain, and third for eggs.... Overall the growth rate was 10-12 percent a year. For the major types of agricultural produce Orel Oblast has outstripped Canada, France, and Italy (per head of population).

After 1991, when privatization and private property became part of the Russians' lives, we worked together with a group of scientists from the Academy of Agricultural Sciences to develop an agrarian policy concept. This concept includes land reform, a free cooperative system, the solution of social questions in the countryside, the reequipment of peasant holdings, and changes to the existing credit and finance system. It also defines the state's role and place in the solution of the countryside's problems.

[Golovachev] This is a fundamental point: Are you for or against private land ownership?

[Stroyev] There is nothing to discuss here, in my view. Private ownership is an important and essential element of a mixed economy, which I support. This is the reality, our new reality. Opposing private ownership today is simply madness. On the other hand, to say that there should be nothing but private ownership would also be extreme. Let there be different forms. But one thing is clear: The peasant must at last have the right to own land free of charge.

But after that, let him decide for himself how to organize his work. He could join a cooperative, a system which is making triumphant strides around the world; he could set up an individual peasant holding, a private farm; he could join an agrarian-financial group using bank and industrial capital.... This is a personal matter for the rural worker. He must have the right to choose, the right to express himself. He must have scope to show his abilities. Those are the principles underlying the agrarian reform in Orel Oblast and Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast.

Thus our generation has to accomplish what they failed to do in Russia after the 1861 reforms [emancipation of the serfs] and what [Russian prime minister 1906-1911] Stolypin failed to complete [fundamental agrarian reform aimed at replacing peasant communes with independent private farmers].

[Golovachev] Is the agrarian reform yielding results?

[Stroyev] It is doing so in those places where it is being conducted in earnest. I shall cite just one example from our life. The Maslovo Limited Partnership, headed by Aleksandr Nikolayevich Dragaystev, was formed on the basis of a backward farm. The partnership has fitted well into the market, formed market structures, become highly profitable, and has tripled its production volume. It has 4,500 hectares of plowland, turns its grain into flour — it is more profitable that way — and is increasing its livestock herd. Shared ownership has been introduced here for the first time — property shares are sold, resold, and bought within the farm by workers and pensioners. Everyone, including pensioners, receives dividends from their share of the land. The partnership allocates money — this is rare! — for training the unemployed in those specialist disciplines the farm needs. And here is perhaps the most remarkable thing: When people receive their dividends today they do not take them home or put them into their bank account, they invest them in production and in their farm.

At the Maslovo Limited Partnership the peasant's share of the value of the end product sold to the consumer is 50 percent or more. The figure across the country as a whole is 18-25 percent. If that share were raised to 50 percent everywhere agriculture would be profitable and the peasants would stop complaining....

I could quote other examples of how farmers set up associations and of what is being done to support them, but that is a separate issue.

[Golovachev] Nevertheless, will Orel Oblast succeed in providing itself with agricultural produce?

[Stroyev] Clearly you have never been to the Orel region. We do not have a food shortage, we have a surplus — 50-70 percent of our food goes for export. The main problem today is where to sell it.... Recently we reached an agreement with the governor of Chukotka on the creation in our region of joint ventures in the processing industry — and we will send food to the northern regions.

[Golovachev] Food prices in your area are two to three times lower than in Moscow, for example. It is quite difficult to maintain such a level in an individual region. Even if there is a surplus of agricultural produce it will be exported to other oblasts where prices are higher. How have you managed to "harmonize" prices? What about bread, for example.... Do you use ration cards? Or is there a ban on the export of produce?

[Stroyev] What do you mean, of course we do not do those things. That is not our way. While people elsewhere were thinking about how to enter the market and whether to accept it or not (this was not an issue in our oblast) we were creating various market structures, including the Orlovskaya Niva Joint-Stock Company with state capital. We laid in food for the whole winter. We bought wheat at 600,000-700,000 rubles [R] a tonne, which is 50 percent higher than the federal government's recommended price (R380,000-R400,000 a tonne). But I knew that we would come out ahead. When the price of flour rose steeply in the country to R2-2.5 million we calmly supplied all the bakery combines and private bakeries at almost one- half that price.

[Golovachev] Some political analysts believe that Russia could be in for new upheavals and cataclysms if there is another attempt to change the social system and return to the soviets, nationalization, and the "iron curtain".... What do you think: Is such a reversal possible?

[Stroyev] If they are saying such things that is simply absurd. Or else the aim is to undermine and destabilize the situation in society. Someone stands to gain from fueling passions and intimidating the Russians with horror stories.... But even if someone had decided on such an insane step, nothing would come of it. This is simply impossible. And to be frank, I see no real forces willing or able to take the country back to the past....

[Golovachev] But, for example, what about the hardliner Viktor Anpilov, who is openly calling for this — is he not a force to be reckoned with still?...

[Stroyev] Well, I completely disregard the extremes — whether on the right or the left. Of course, this is always a manifestation of certain processes taking place in society. They really exist and we have to be aware of them because they reflect the mood of a part of the population, but the country's future does not depend on the extremists.

Generally speaking it is necessary to avoid extremes in all things. For example, it is strange to hear people calling for everything to be nationalized or, conversely, to be denationalized. Let us recall how smoothly the processes of nationalization and denationalization ebbed and flowed like the tide in postwar Germany and in Britain. A state enterprises goes into the red, it is recapitalized, recovery takes place, and the plant is sold into private hands.... If this is beneficial to the people, the nation, and the state, not only should we have no "qualms" about it, we should do it positively. At the same time we understand perfectly well that there are known loss-making sectors which will continue to make a loss no matter what we do. However, neither the national economy nor the country can develop without them. That is why society must consciously work toward maintaining these sectors using state support. In these conditions, of course, the nationalization of certain enterprises is possible. The main thing is to ensure that there are no extremes and no "all or nothing" approach.

Not the fueling of passions but the search for accord — that is the only constructive approach. I am sure that there will be no upheaval in the country, the worst upheavals are already behind us now. Russia's strength has always been in its provinces, which preserve the country's morality, stability, and unity. The regions have protected Russia from a critical development of events at the most difficult periods in our modern history. And if someone resorts to a scenario of destabilization and upheaval the regions will simply not allow that to happen. An important stabilizing role will be played by the Federation Council, whose members do not hanker after power (they already have it) and are answerable to their people for peace and the development of the country.

[Golovachev] My final questions are particularly personal ones. Under the Constitution the Federation Council chairman works on a part-time basis. You have two jobs — in Moscow and Orel. Do you visit Orel often? Where does your family live? How did your wife react to your new job?

[Stroyev] I visit Orel often — virtually every week. It takes just four hours to get there by car or train, 40 minutes by plane. So there are no problems in that regard. My wife, to be frank, was very upset and greeted the news of my new appointment with tears. The job that she loves is in Orel (she is a secondary school teacher) and her friends are there (she has no family — her father, mother, grandfather, and uncle all died in the Bryansk forests during the partisan struggle). How can she leave all that? I spent a long time consoling her and tried to explain the situation to her. But she said to me: "Before concerning yourself with stability in the country think about our stability...." But now she has come to Moscow for a few days and.... My daughter (she is also a teacher), my son-in-law (he is a military man and is serving in the capital), and my grandson are here. Generally speaking, these house moves are not very easy....

In conclusion I should like to tell you what I firmly believe: Russia will arise and overcome its difficulties. It is well known that he who has experienced much moves forward more cautiously but more confidently.

Media Issues

Russia: Media Said Giving Communists Easy Ride

MM0802144996 Moscow EKSPRESS-KHRONIKA in Russian 5 Feb 96 p 1

[Commentary by Aleksandr Postnov: "Who Is Helping the Bolsheviks to Power?" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The rule always used to be: "Vremya" for business, "Parliamentary Hour" for amusement. The whole Russian Federation, all its 89 components, would laugh at the Duma. Now it is another matter... If you do laugh while looking at the current Duma, it is only through bitter tears. "Look, I write, choked by falling teardrops" at the very thought that the Communists have seized power again in both houses of the Russian Federal Assembly. And the Communists, as their bloody 70-year rule showed only too well, do not like to joke. Look at Comrade Zyuganov. As the now forgotten Russian writer Ivan Gorbunov might have said of him: "If you meet someone like that in the forest, drop to your knees before him, and beg him for mercy." And I feel very sorry for the little bird. You know, the two-headed one. They will tear them off, just like that — the Communists will tear off both its heads. And in hatred of the Russian tricolor they will tear out the white and blue stripes and draw on the hammer and sickle again on the red. And no Yeltsin will help here. He will most likely not even try. History gave him a unique chance to adopt a law on radical elements and accordingly to ban the Communist Party for about 10 or 15 years until Democracy had found its feet in Russia. To this day I am ready to tear out — not my own hair, but the president's, for scorning this opportunity, allowing the communist elite the chance to become a regional elite, and thereby to preserve themselves for the behind-the-scenes battle with democratic reforms.

True, once again the Russian democratic intelligentsia played a fateful role here, having already once before helped the Bolsheviks to power. Vying with one another in starry-eyed idealism, the democrat phrasemongers kept repeating, with a stubbornness worthy of better use, that the new democratic power should not organize a witch-hunt. That was a very short time ago. The witches have settled down nicely in the Federal Assembly, and are now hunting the democrats with alacrity.

The press also played a fateful role. After the new power had ordered the press to become free, it very much wanted to become bold as well (better if it had tried to become clever first). The same television programs, the same newspapers and magazines — the very same journalists, for heaven's sake — who only quite recently earned their crust by wholeheartedly singing the praises of the achievements of real socialism and their beloved Communist Party's concern for the monolithic Soviet people, today earn their crust by, again wholeheartedly, stigmatizing the federal authorities and its reforms, which are moving the country away from the achievements of real socialism.

Governments (any government, especially the current one, which we inherited from the previous one) should have their stupidity, their corruption, and their inconsistency exposed. But instead of this, journalists compete with each other in boldness. For example, they roundly cursed the federal authorities over the fact that Gaydar (Kozyrev, Chubays, Filatov...) just would not resign. But it sufficed for him (them) to resign after all, for journalists to start cursing the authorities for getting rid of the most steadfast and consistent democrats.

Bold? It is not boldness that is required here, although the appearance of boldness, sometimes of reckless boldness, is created for the sake of the readers (viewers, listeners). You can even abuse the authorities in the sort of language which is usually scrawled on walls. They will not even lift a finger to make some kind of reply. And journalists have long since realized this.

The regional elite and the regional authorities are quite another matter. They defend themselves against any criticism quickly and effectively, using the panoply of the law — the public prosecutor's office, the police, the courts, and the security service (in Tatarstan the latter has not even changed its name, remaining to this day the Committee of State Security [KGB]). The Moscow press is continually reporting the prosecution of various publications which have had the temerity to raise their voices against the regional elite. For example, IZVESTIYA related in a lengthy article 20 January that, of three (just three!) independent newspapers in Krasnodar Kray, only one survives — VOLNAYA KUBAN — and even that will be condemned any day now by the criminal courts.

And journalists have realized this too, which is why there is no material in the newspapers (or on radio or television) that is in the least bit critical of the local authorities. And of course, the regional elite — which had fallen sick, but has now fully recovered — sneers ever more boldly at any reforms. Our bold press turns a blind eye to this — otherwise it would cost it dear. But in order to continue to look bold in the eyes of its readers (viewers or listeners), its only recourse is to stigmatize still more strongly the federal authorities, and, along with them (there is no getting away from it) the reforms themselves, thereby pushing the authorities to reject the reforms. Local journalists, and even more so, the own correspondents of the Moscow mass media, do not touch the local authorities. They survive because they are not ashamed to pronounce apropos the local authorities such unnatural expressions as "the go-ahead workers of agriculture," "grandiose tasks," and, of course, "weighty successes." But they too want to be bold, so they too are unstinting in their choice of strong expressions apropos the same old federal authorities. Formerly, this rhetoric was used against American imperialism.

So it is that the federal authorities and everything that stems from them is just about the ultimate evil. On the other hand, the federal authorities are the good that is fighting this evil. This primitive, and, therefore, easily mastered formula they have drummed into the head of Russia's thick hicks from the sticks [glupinka — a pun on "glupyy," stupid, and "glubinka," the provinces, provincials; or possibly just a misprint for the latter term], who have not yet lost faith in the printed word or words uttered on television. I think that it is worth repeating that the regional elite is, with few exceptions, a Communist elite. KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA for 24 January cited a remarkable phrase used by Mintimer Shaymiyev, [former] first secretary of the Tatar CPSU Oblast Committee, and the current president of Tatarstan, which he uttered after the election of Yegor Stroyev, [former] secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Politburo member, as chairman of the Federation Council: "We are all Communists here. We were all Communists in the past, and some of us are still."

Nor do I think that my conclusion that this bold press of ours does not touch the Communists either will not seem too ridiculous. And if it does touch them — which happens extremely rarely — then it does so only briefly and loosely, not taking the risk of naming specific names. I am not talking about those lengthy articles about the bloody crimes of the former Bolshevik elite and the ChK-GPU-NKVD-MGB-KGB [all former names of the state security service] which, by the way, were provided to the mass media by the state security service themselves (mind you, even these articles have long since disappeared somewhere or other), but about today's Communists, who are striving for power, and who have already forced their way to power. This factor, after all, also influences the Russian voters' assessment of the goal of the reforms, and, in the final analysis, their choice.

And now even the untargeted criticism has disappeared. The pages of publications increasingly resound with complimentary remarks about the victorious Communists. This, for example, is how IZVESTIYA appraised the orthodox Communist Yegor Stroyev 24 January: "He is a sturdy leader, as they say, and such people are always valued. He is well acquainted with practical work, and does not lag behind theory — this is not a matter even of holding a doctorate, but of his extensive contacts with academics. World experience is for him a familiar point of reference. And he never allows himself to be distracted or to jump too far ahead. It must be said that Yegor Stroyev has in practical terms done no less, and perhaps even more, for the advancement of our reforms than many of those who class themselves as the most avid reformers."

How do you like that? Well now, why did the international tribunal in Nuremberg sentence to hanging a dozen Nazi criminals, including Goering, Keitel, Ribbentrop, Frank, Strauche, and Jodl? Perhaps they would have done for the new Germany no less, and perhaps even more than Konrad Adenauer himself, who was counted an avid reformer.

I will not even speak of the compliments which the press more and more frequently showers on Comrades Zyuganov and Seleznev. It is disgusting! On the other hand, I will ask you to compare the almost hysterical rhetoric into which the same issue of IZVESTIYA plunged when pillorying the federal authorities: "The political life-support team, composed of regular analysts, advisers, and speech writers is searching in vain for an effective means of breathing a second Kremlin life into the guarantor of their own future careers." I think that this scrap of newspaper instead of snake venom could easily be applied as a local anesthetic.

Let me repeat: The press should not give the authorities an easy ride over anything. But if the press subjects only the federal authorities and its reforms to criticism which is, in my view, not very clever and is short on analysis, but which is nonetheless extremely fierce, while leaving the regional elite and the Communists unscathed, that means that the press is much keener on the regional elite and the Communists and all that they entail. Formerly the press fed on the tasty scraps that continually fell from the lords' table. For what? For writing about "the mighty tread," "the pivotal year of the five year plan," "the historic decisions of the CPSU congresses." Now there is nowhere for the scraps to fall from; now you have to work for your crust.

I think that for this reason the press' criticism has a subtext: Today the country is rife with crime, corruption, bureaucratic obtuseness, mass poverty, ethnic hatred... But formerly everything was wonderful: There was no rampage of crime; the rare instances of corruption were severely punished (including by the party organs); functionaries were wise and responsive; poverty was quite unheard of; and the peoples of the mighty Soviet Union loved one another tenderly and sincerely. Read any critical article — it will undoubtedly have this subtext: What a marvelous country the federal authorities inherited, and just look what they have done to it.

Apart from the fact that the press itself perhaps does not even fully realize this, pining for recent times, it is also a peculiar feature of the human memory — to forget all the bad and to remember only the good. For an example, let me turn once again to KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA for 23 January. "I am a Russian," Yaroslav Golovanov writes in a full-page article, "in my 38 years as a journalist I have traveled round all the republics of the USSR — all of them. I will never believe that Ukrainians, Kazaks, and Georgians hate Russians. There was no hatred in the past, and there can be none now, if only because, after the Belovezhskaya Forest Last Supper, not one of the peoples of the former USSR republics began to live better following its collapse." And so it goes on. Thus probably did Comrade Golovanov intone more than once in his 38 years as a journalist: "Ah, how fine it is to live in a Soviet country!"

I do not know whether this is simply naive, or indicative of a frank desire to give a sober assessment of the circumstances of those years. Well, who in those times would have confessed out loud to an official journalist to something that differed even a hairsbreadth from the official ideology? [passage omitted]

Nor were there any fewer corrupt officials in those times. But they were defended by their beloved Communist Party, which almost never handed over functionaries who had been caught taking bribes to the obedient law-enforcement organs. The latter were aware of this, and were by no means eager to catch bribetakers.

The aforementioned Yaroslav Golovanov writes in the same article that he cannot imagine Suslov [former party chief ideologist] as an investor in the Bank of Geneva. Well, why not? On the orders of Comrade Suslov and his comrades in arms in the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and Secretariat several tens of millions of dollars were transferred to the Bank of Geneva and other foreign banks. But according to this interpretation, even Suslov is infinitely preferable to the current authorities and their reforms!

Should we be surprised and stare in wild amaze at the fact that the Russian voter preferred the runt of Comrade Suslov's litter? It is entirely logical!

Military Issues

Russia: Commander Views Air Force Status, Chechnya

LD0802183096 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1610 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Summary] Moscow Public Television broadcasts a 22-minute interview with Colonel General Petr Stepanovich Deynekin, commander in chief of the Russian Federation Air Force, in the 'Rush Hour' program. Deynekin answers questions from progam presenter Andrey Razbash on the situation in the Russian Air Force and issues relating to air strikes in Chechnya.

The program starts with Deynekin's biographical details and a description of his character, as follows: "Petr Deynekin descends from the Don Cossacks. He graduated from the Balashovo Higher Aviation School, the Gagarin Air Force Academy, and the General Staff Academy. He has spent over 5,000 hours of his life airborne. He has flown everything that can fly. He progressed from the ground to the skies: from being the commander of a flight of three or four aircraft to being commander in chief of the Russian Air Force. He enjoys deserved respect among pilots. He is a cautious and pragmatic man, not letting his emotions run too high.

Among friends he has the reputation of a desperate romantic. He believes that honesty and dedication to one's work are the main quality of a professional. He likes the skies and is fond of watching stars. He is confident that Russia will never be left without an air force."

After quoting Deynekin as saying: "I am ready to account for every explosion in Chechnya," Razbash asks his guest why he feels the need to be accountable. Deynekin says that "any state official is accountable, and the commander in chief of the Air Force during war should especially be accountable both to his superiors and investigating bodies if circumstances arise and to his own conscience, if you like." Razbash goes on to ask: "A year ago when the events in Chechnya were just starting it was not clear whose aircraft were flying there and whose aircraft were delivering the first bomb strikes. Was it the aviation of the military district stationed there or were they units acting on orders from Moscow?"

Deynekin explains: "When Dudayev's statements started to contain openly schizophrenic plans about striking against especially important facilities in Russia — such as nuclear power stations, major fuel dumps and other facilities potentially posing a danger to the environment and lives — we were forced to carry out an air operation aimed at eliminating Dudayev's aviation group on the ground. The Russian Air Force was involved in it. The air army stationed there — in the south of our Fatherland, with its headquarters in Rostov — and the ground forces' aviation did not take part in these actions."

Asked about the number of aircraft Dudayev had and what threat they posed, Deynekin says: "Even several dozen highly qualified, brazen and well-armed bandits controlled by radio present a threat. A group of Czech-made training aircraft such as the L-39s — he had over 250 of them — presented of course a very serious threat. As soon as they started to prepare means to deliver air strikes, we were forced to destroy them on the ground, and here we were not discriminating. Together with them [the training aircraft] several passenger aircraft were destroyed, including Dudayev's personal airliner, and all the so-called agricultural aircraft — I mean the An-2 planes. These aircraft were dangerous as they could be used to bring in arms, drugs, or reinforcements or to fly dangerous criminals abroad."

On what happened in Samashki and Roshni-Chu and whether there really was information that Dudayev's headquarters or arms dumps were situated there, Petr Deynekin explains: "As soon as offensive military actions in Chechnya ended and the Defense Ministry had fulfilled the tasks posed using its own forces, the Ministry of Internal Affairs dealt with the issues relating to establishment of constitutional order in the territory of this republic, and we acted at their request. Taking into account the public reaction, we never again used the Air Force's aircraft and destructive weapons against populated areas. We delivered strikes only against military targets, namely dumps, and the bases of the gunmen in cases where they were concentrated together and had been authentically detected by all kinds of reconnaissance. As for the dive-bombing strike against Roshni-Chu — it was during the first ten days of October, I think — I have already answered the prosecutors' questions to me on more than one occasion — I could not have controlled this air strike as I was abroad, and the Air Force and the Fourth Air Army do not have any documents dealing with the matter of organizing this air strike."

On how operations are controlled and in what form orders are issued, the colonel general says: "If time is short, orders are given orally, but written confirmation follows immediately. Combat tasks are posed as directives or orders, this depending on the level of the military chief and the scale of the operation. Of course, the truth and the true state of affairs relating to the development of events can be established, if necessary."

Speaking about salaries paid to pilots, Deynekin explains: "Up to last September the salary of a fighter pilot was about 500,000-700,000 rubles [R] a month. Then by a decision of the defense minister we levelled salaries out, and now they [salaries] are similar to salaries of those working in other power structures, I mean the internal affairs' bodies, border guards, and the Federal Agency of Government Communications. Now a pilot with the rank of major receives about R1.5-1.7 million. I believe that this situation cannot be tolerated as a pilot is flying an aircraft valued at $30 million on the international market. If one is to speak about the Su-27 aircraft, it is $40 million. "A NATO pilot gets $5,000-$7,000 a month." "Now with the support of the defense minister — he has a more than benevolent attitude to aviation, he values and likes it — we will be increasing salaries paid to skilled pilots who have came to worldwide prominence through the recent tragedy and their skills. I met them today and promised to do everything possible to enable them to receive more money."

Razbash recalls that in 1989 he paid a visit to a strategic aviation base and saw the appalling living conditions of those who were flying aircraft carrying nuclear weapons, and he asks Deynekin about the present conditions and about who bears responsibility for them. The commander in chief goes on to say: "I'll answer your last question first. I am the one who is responsible for the state of the Air Force and I guarantee that the morale of our personnel is good. People understand, even though it was in December that they were paid last, and that was only 40 percent [of their salaries]. In this matter we are gradually catching up with miners. Our living conditions have worsened, but not everywhere. The thing is that when the Union was dismembered, we were forced to move major aviation groups and tens of thousands of officers into Russia. Although the Air Force has 11 aviation cantonments with superb flats, kindergartens, hospitals, schools equipped with computers, swimming pools, boiler-houses boasting of a cleanliness on a par with a surgical theater, this is not enough. A total of 2,500 pilots of the 5,000-strong flight personnel do not have flats. It is a crisis situation."

The program continues with statistical information displayed on screen: "According to the press center of the Air Force, over 3,500 aircraft and helicopters have been lost in air crashes since 1965. Over 4,500 men died and this equates to the number of officers who graduated from all flying schools of the former USSR during a three-year period. Over 13 air incidents happen every year. The annual flying time of the Air Force regiments has been reduced more than 3.5 times. In 1993-94 almost 2,500 aircraft and helicopters were redeployed to unprepared aerodromes. Last year aviation had only 39 percent of the fuel required. In 1994 the Defense Ministry purchased only 30 aircraft compared with the 300 aircraft required. Last year it purchased only one."

As regards the prospects for the Air Force and its strength, Petr Deynekin says: "We will fly the most up-to-date fourth-generation aircraft. We have 500 MiG-29s in service. Jointly with the Air Defense we have an excellent group of 400 Su-27 aircraft. At the same time Air Defense is equipped with with 500 MiG-31 aircraft. Frontline bomber aviation is equipped with 500 Su-24 aircraft. Military-transport aviation — our pride — has several dozen Ruslans, 54 Antheus aircraft, and 274 Il-76 aircraft — the latter being freight planes with a 40-tonne payload."

Razbash expresses concern over the inadequate financing of the Air Force which may lead to a loss of strength. Deynekin says: "This strength will be maintained till the year of 2005. Here is my answer regarding what we are going to fly in two years' time: we will fly what we are flying now. If we do not finance our aviation industry now, in 2005 we will really have nothing to fly. We will be supplied with all kinds of foreign junk. Therefore, we do not put our trust in a trickle of funds from the state budget. We have very good schemes to attract fantastic funds, which we already have, for our scientific-research and experimental-design work, for the upkeep of aircraft and for aviation fuel. Recently we held an extended sitting of the Air Force military council with the participation of the brightest people from the aviation industry, institutes, design bureaus, and general designers. We agreed on very good schemes and drew conclusions. One of them is as follows: Recently Russia and China signed a contract, and we sold China a licence to manufacture the most up-to-date Su-27 fighter aircraft. From this deal Russia received $2.2 billion. If a proportion of this money were to finance our industry, even in 10 years' time we would still remain a mighty aviation power. This is just one example. Incidentally after the disintegration of the Union there was a huge imbalance between the CIS republics and Russia. We have innumerable stocks of aviation engines, missiles, and other equipment which we could supply to over 60 states via 'Rosvooruzheniye.' This is another channel through which we could influence the situation."

Concluding the program, Razbash asks Petr Deynekin to comment on the accident in Cam Ranh. Referring to a diagram, the commander in chief says: "Since we have agreed to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, I have already repeated it several times — I first stated this on 12 December: The crew of the Il-76 leading aircraft was at fault. There were two highly trained leading specialists: General Grebennikov who had flown on duty missions to the U.S. coastal line, was superb at refuelling maneuvers and was in charge of regiments — this is not widely known but we did such things as a rule under the cover of night. He had a navigator who flew around the world via the two poles — the North and South Poles — on the Ruslan aircraft and in doing this he set seven world records."

Deynekin continues: "Unfortunately, a tragedy happens when no one expects it. They had satellite navigation equipment on board. Vityaz pilots remained Vityaz pilots to the very last. They kept their place in formation and trusted their commander. Through inertia on the part of the group controlling the flights, the crew flagrantly violated the descent path of approach." He notes that "this was the crew of the leading Il-76 aircraft."

Razbash asks: "Were the ground services observing the descent of the Il-76? Did they warn about the danger of losing height?"

Deynekin replies: "They did not say that they could not see the group on the most dangerous sections and did nothing to prevent violation of the rules for the descent path regarding altitude. This is a grave situation." Deynekin goes on to reiterate that the blame for the tragedy lies with the leading aircraft and ground services.

Russia: Kokoshin Cited on Long-Term Armaments Program

MM0802142596 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 1

["Own information" report under the "News" rubric: "Defense Industry Will Have Long-Term Prospects"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Andrey Kokoshin, Russian Federation first deputy defense minister, has met [vstretilsya] with a group of Maritime Kray defense enterprise directors. At most of these enterprises a very acute situation has developed because of the state's incomplete payment of funds earmarked by the 1995 budget for the defense order and conversion projects. Colonel General Anatoliy Sitnov, chief of Armaments of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, Admiral Valeriy Grishanov, deputy commander in chief of the Navy, and State Duma Deputy Svetlana Orlova took part in the meeting [vstrecha]. A number of specific measures to improve the state of affairs at these enterprises was outlined and the appropriate appeals to the government were prepared.

Kokoshin informed the participants in the meeting [vstrecha] that the draft state defense order for 1996 is now being considered by the government but that the Defense Ministry has already obtained permission to prepare draft contracts for the state defense order worth 80 percent of the volume of appropriations envisaged. In a number of cases these contracts will keep enterprises going into 1997. In addition, the Defense Ministry, jointly with the State Committee for the Defense Sectors of Industry and the Economy Ministry, has submitted a draft long-term Armaments Program to the Russian Federation Government.

First Deputy Defense Minister Kokoshin has reported on this program's main provisions to Russian Federation President B.N. Yeltsin.

It was noted at the meeting [soveshchaniye] that, in its plans for the long-term development of armaments and military equipment, besides ensuring a nuclear deterrent potential, the Defense Ministry is putting emphasis on the latest methods of warfare, specifically high-precision weapons, information backup for troops and forces, increasing the soldier's individual equipment level, etc. This program is of great importance to the development of Russian arms exports.

Following publication of the forecast for and the program of the Russian Federation's socioeconomic development for the years 1996-2000, and of the concept for 1996-2005, which are due to appear this summer, and following the streamlining [utochneniye] of the structure and composition of the Armed Forces, certain individual adjustments to the Armaments Program may be required.

Russia: Lobov Says Arms Sales To Increase in 1996

LD0702232796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1519 GMT 7 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 7 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — Russian arms supplies on the world market will increase this year; however, arms exports will not be a priority direction for replenishing the budget and taking the country out of the economic crisis, Oleg Lobov, secretary of the Security Council and plenipotentiary representative of the president of the Russian Federation in Chechnya, said at a news conference after the sitting of the Security Council today.

He said that "arms sales as such cannot be welcomed." Lobov said that, despite the increased arms exports, Russia would still be far behind in this respect from the former USSR or such major suppliers of armaments as the United States, France, and Germany.

In 1995 Russian sales of military products totalled about $2.5 billion, compared with $1.71 billion in 1994. According to experts at the Russian Federation state Committee for Military and Technical Policy, in the next few years Russian annual sales of military products can reach $3 or 4 billion. According to forecasts, in 1995-2000 the largest part of Russian supplies of armaments and military services will go to India, the United Arab Emirates, China, and Syria.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Primakov Tells Duma of Foreign Policy Priorities

LD0802160996 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1400 GMT 8 Feb 96

[Correspondent A. Pishchayev video report; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yevgeniy Primakov, Russia's Foreign Minister, today took part in a meeting of the State Duma's International Committee. He stressed the importance of close contacts between his department and the corps of deputies and dwelt on the priorities of our country's foreign policy. He denied assertions that the integration of Russia with the countries of the near abroad is an attempt to reanimate the Soviet Union. We are not calling for that and we shall never call for it, Yevgeniy Primakov said.

He said that Russia should play a stabilizing role in the far abroad. The most important thing here is to prevent a slide into confrontation and a new Cold War in relations with our former opponents. Russia will strive for cooperation with them in all spheres of foreign policy activity, but not in a relationship of leader and led, where we must follow in the wake of someone else's policy and repeat the movements of the one in front.

In the same report Yevgeniy Primakov touched on the problem of the eastwards expansion of NATO:

[Begin Primakov recording] Yes, now we cannot hammer on the table with our fist and we do not intend to do this. We have no right to forbid any country, any sovereign state, from joining any international organization. But at the same time, we do not wish to forgo and we shall not forgo our own interests; and the interests of Russia are that NATO should not be expanded. [end recording]

What does the new foreign minister propose?

[Begin Primakov recording] To find some way out of the situation which will take account of the interests and concerns both of the countries of eastern and central Europe, but at the same time, take account of the interests of such a country as Russia. That is what we are proposing to our partners. [end recording] [video shows Primakov addressing meeting]

Russia: Duma Deputies Leave To Help Free Hostages in Chechnya

LD0802132296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1250 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Igor Zhukov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — The first team of Russian State Duma members are leaving for Chechnya on Thursday to help release hostages held by Chechen militants.

The chairman of the special commission set up by the Duma to ensure the release, Yuliy Rybakov, told TASS that two other teams of lawmakers would leave for Chechnya and Dagestan on Monday.

The first team is led by Konstantin Borovoy, the second by Eduard Vorobyev and the third by Yuliy Rybakov. Ramazan Abdulatipov will coordinate their efforts.

Russia: Duma Toughens Stance on Tallin's Anti-Russian Policy

LD0802182796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1644 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Ivan Novikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 8 (ITAR-TASS) — The State Duma committee for relations with compatriots is going to take a more rigid stance on violation of rights of Russian-speakers in the former Soviet republics, committee deputy chairman Mikhail Vakulenko told a news conference today.

The conference concerned discrimination of the Russian community in Estonia. The particular case in point was the recent, third deportation from Estonia of Petr Rozhok, a Russian national.

Rozhok, of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy-led ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party, is one of leaders of Estonia's Russian community.

Repeat requests by the Russian Foreign Ministry to extend his visa had been ignored by Estonian authorities.

"We fully share the position of the Russian Foreign Ministry, the case of Petr Rozhok, which has a hidden political motive, is an open anti-Russian action," Vakulenko said.

Rozhok told the conference that he was first deported from Estonia in March of 1995 and had been unsuccessfully trying since to have the deportation order reversed in court.

He said there is no documentary evidence of his anti-constitutional activities in Estonia which its authorities said were the ground for his expulsion.

Tallinn's court in a hearing on February 1 ruled Rozhok's deportation as rightful.

He said at the conference that his case was an indication that Estonia is forging a "judicial base" for harassment of politically active Russian-speakers.

The Russian State Duma, or the lower house, passed a resolution, in March of 1995, demanding economic sanctions against Estonia.

Russia: Federation Council Chairman Stroyev Describes Aims

MM0902110796 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA (Weekend Edition) in Russian 9 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Anna Kozyreva: "Chairman on Senators' Duty"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a press conference in the Federation Council the chairman of the upper chamber has described plans for the future.

The Federation Council of the second convocation embarked on its work quite recently and has held just two sessions. But in this brief period, according to Yegor Stroyev, it has managed without excessive dispute to form committees and to elect chairmen and deputy chairmen for these committees.

The new chairman, speaking of his colleagues, has already frequently repeated that they are all "sound people" and the slogan for their work is "no war with anyone." In fact that means that the senators do not intend to enter into conflict with the government, president, or Duma. They will make all their decisions on the basis of state interests and relying on common sense.

"The chamber is geared toward peaceful, constructive work," the chairman concluded.

The senators do not want to adopt populist laws either.

Indeed, that was how the Federation Council members argued when they discussed a number of important social laws which were adopted by the previous chamber but not signed by the president. They include the law on the minimum wage and state guarantees to people living in the regions of the far North. The chamber did not approve the laws. And the president's veto was not overcome. Commenting on this decision the chairman of the upper chamber noted at the press conference: "The direct path is not always the shortest." If the proposed versions of the draft laws had been adopted then essentially the people would have been duped. The 1996 budget provides for no money for the implementation of these laws and the law on the minimum wage along requires over 60 trillion rubles. The problem cannot be resolved from local budgets — the regions have no money either. But laws are also needed, there is no doubt of that. Stroyev himself believes that it is "the senators' moral duty" to adopt them. But before adopting the laws means of financing must be sought and thought given perhaps to their gradual introduction.

Yegor Stroyev believes that the main avenue of the chamber's lawmaking work will be the elaboration of the concept of Russia's economic security. It is planned to hold a preliminary discussion with various economic institutions, the government, and representatives of the president in order to "check the compass reading." The senators also have to elaborate "a clear, precise social program." According to Yegor Semenovich not a single country can develop without such a program.

Russia: Stroyev Counts on Cooperation With Yeltsin

MK0802145096 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Yegor Stroyev Expects the President To Consult Him and Governors On Election"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Today Boris Yeltsin plays host to the administration heads of all Russian Federation components. Speaking yesterday at a news conference devoted to the Federation Council's future legislative activity, Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroyev suggested that the governors would necessarily raise questions about the financial situation in their regions and wage and pension arrears. He believes that the president should straighten out these problems with them. Furthermore, the Federation Council speaker hopes that Boris Yeltsin will consult the administration heads about his participation in the election. Yegor Stroyev himself is ready to cooperate with Mr. Yeltsin. True, he is expecting the same from the president. "He who takes no counsel loses," the new speaker said in response to the question about whether Yeltsin will seek his opinion on the presidential election campaign. Mr. Stroyev said, "I am a conflict-free man. There are no people in this room who would like to be in confrontation with anybody." Indeed, at its 6-7 February session the new senate rejected, by an overwhelming majority, the laws adopted by the previous house and vetoed by the president. "We have come here not to share portfolios. We have the country behind our back. The people are behind us," Mr. Stroyev said.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Bashkir President Sees 'No Alternative' to Yeltsin

LD0902121896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 9 (INTERFAX) — Bashkir President Murtaza Rakhimov sees no alternative to Boris Yeltsin. Numerous as they are, other participants in the presidential race are no match for Yeltsin, Rakhimov said in Friday's interview with the INTERFAX news agency.

Regardless of his numerous blunders, Yeltsin will be remembered as a progressive reformer, and blunders are inevitable on the road to reform, Rakhimov said.

It was with Yeltsin that Bashkortostan signed an historic power-sharing agreement. It was with Yeltsin that we embarked on the road to reform and it is with Yeltsin that we intend to walk the road of reform to its logical end, Rakhimov said.

Apart from that, Rakhimov advised Yeltsin to adjust his reform strategies against the current political, social and economic developments and to "pick a new team."

Yeltsin should be surrounded by the largest possible number of knowledgeable and highly dedicated teammates and reject the services of those who are likely to do him a bad turn, Rakhimov said.

Rakhimov described today's Communists as "far different from those of ten years ago," in response to an INTERFAX question on the possibility of a Communist victory in the presidential elections.

Who wins the elections, is not that important. What counts most is the question of recoil from the reform strategy. The reforms must be carried out regardless of who wins the elections. Otherwise, Russia will face a catastrophe, Rakhimov said.

Russia: Luzhkov Candidate in Jun Moscow Mayoral Elections

LD0802224096 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2100 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Yuriy Luzhkov officially confirmed on Thursday that he would run for Moscow mayor in the forthcoming elections on 16 June. Announcing this in a letter to the leaders of the Moscow Federation of Trade Unions, he expressed gratitude to this organization for nominating him.

Russia: Security Tightened in Kabardino-Balkaria

LD0902103696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1004 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Gennadiy Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NALCHIK February 9 (ITAR-TASS) — In accordance with a resolution of the leadership of the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria, Northern Caucasus, strict security measures are being taken there to prevent possible acts of terrorism and subversion. Security was tightened on the borders of Kabardino-Balkaria, a spokesman for the republican Interior Ministry told TASS. Senior officials of the Interior Ministry together with members of the republican government and security council keep under their personal control border check-points and rapid-deployment units.

The patrolling of streets by police details was intensified in Nalchik and other major populated localities of the republic. Hospitals, schools, children's homes and the main industrial enterprises are being guarded.

Russia: Sevastopol Mayor Blamed for Baltin's BSF Ouster

MM0802110596 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 8 Feb 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Yuriy Velikanov: "Who 'Brought Down' Admiral Baltin"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sevastopol — On very close inspection Russia's policy with regard to Ukraine over the past few years looks neither integrated nor consistent nor constant. Sometimes there are sharp statements with poorly concealed anger, sometimes outright fraternization on the shore of the warm sea, sometimes "strategic partnership" forever, sometimes ice, sometimes fire, sometimes hatred, sometimes love.

Let us recall the whole series of problems which have existed in interstate relations between Russia and Ukraine virtually since the day the two independent states were formed: the Black Sea Fleet [BSF], the settling of accounts for the energy carriers delivered to Ukraine, rates for the transportation of Russian oil and gas across Ukrainian territory, the delimitation and demarcation of borders, the regulation of fishing in the Azov Sea, the determination of the navigation regime in the Kerch Strait, and a whole bundle of smaller problems not to mention questions of NATO's cooperation with Ukraine, that state's nuclear disarmament, and the connected settling of accounts, the demarcation of the USSR's foreign property and debts, Ukraine's abiding "special opinion" on the question of cooperation within the CIS framework, and so on and so forth. The overwhelming majority of these questions have been deadlocked and have not been resolved despite Russia's obvious economic, military, and geopolitical supremacy over its smaller neighbor.

The new trends in Russian-Ukrainian relations have shaken even people unversed in political games not to mention political scientists and observers: Russia — quite suddenly — reeled and recoiled from its former seemingly unshakable positions consolidated over the course of the past few years! Quite recently Boris Yeltsin gave a very expressive assurance at a press conference that until the final fate of the Black Sea Fleet had been decided he would not go to Ukraine. He had in mind the president's official visit to Kiev to conclude a full-scale political treaty on friendship and cooperation between the two countries. Literally months later, after Leonid Kuchma's visit to Moscow and his tete-a-tete with the Russian president 16 January Boris Yeltsin changed his stance to the direct opposite and the Ukrainian mass media are even citing a possible date for the eminent Moscow guest's arrival in Kiev....

This was followed by one more sensation — first Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and then Vladimir Gorbuli [name as transliterated], secretary of the Ukrainian president's national security council, announced there was an agreement between the presidents to suggest "alternative work" to Admiral Eduard Baltin, commander of the Black Sea Fleet. Without any apparent reason, under conditions of the expiry of the Yalta (1992) agreement on the Black Sea Fleet, one of whose points regulated the joint appointment — by the two presidents — of the Black Sea Fleet commander, to dismiss an honored military leader, frankly pro-power and popular in Russia — can one imagine a more unfortunate move on the threshold of new presidential elections in Russia? Especially as the Ukrainian politicians are not even trying to conceal the fact that Boris Yeltsin has made this decision at Leonid Kuchma's insistent request....

It must be specially stipulated that against the background of the concessions made by the Russian president the other results of the Russian-Ukrainian summit meeting are more than modest. It follows from official reports that no progress was achieved in a single field of the broad spectrum of interstate problems. The question of the status of Sevastopol and the Russian Black Sea Fleet, clearing operations, rates for the transportation of oil, and many other questions were yet again passed on for discussion by the Russian-Ukrainian joint government commission which prime ministers Viktor Chernomyrdin and Yevhen Marchuk have been assigned to head. This commission, incidentally, is not being created for the first time and it is not the first time that it has been assigned the mission of "agreeing" vexed issues. It must be noted that the solution of all problems has yet again been deferred.

Nonetheless many observers note that personal mutual relations between the Russian and Ukrainian presidents have improved substantially recently. At least Boris Nikolayevich is no longer accusing his counterpart of failing to fulfill the promises he has made and Leonid Danilovich is not complaining about the tendentiousness of the information reaching the Russian president. Moreover, according to some reports it was Leonid Kuchma who was the first to support the proposal to extend Boris Yeltsin's term as chairman of the council of CIS heads of state by a further six months. Which was done unanimously.

But everything has its price. And in my view Yeltsin has paid with the resignation of Admiral Eduard Baltin, commander of the Black Sea Fleet, widely known for his statements unfavorable to Ukraine.

In particular the now former commander of the Black Sea Fleet has spoken repeatedly and rather frankly about Ukraine's very modest economic potential as regards maintaining its own naval forces, whose organizational development is proceeding on the basis of on- shore establishments and ships received as a result of the division of the Black Sea Fleet. Essentially Admiral Baltin was initially an opponent of the division of a single military organism, pointing to the pernicious consequences of this process for the fleet itself. Using strategic thinking, in his speeches Baltin did not overlook some aspects of the domestic and foreign policy of the state where he had had occasion to serve.

Circles close to him are familiar with the powerful character of Eduard Baltin, whose star of Hero of the Soviet Union and almost 14 years as an admiral allow to maintain his independence in any environment and in any circumstances. It is obviously for this reason that in his three years as Black Sea Fleet commander Admiral Baltin has earned himself many influential enemies among whom people in the know list not only local businessmen whose path to the Black Sea Fleet's essentially ownerless property Baltin has always barred and not only Ukrainian Navy commander Vladimir Bezkorovaynyy [name as transliterated], Anatoliy Lopata [name as transliterated], Ukrainian Armed Forces Chief of General Staff, Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Ivan Bizhan [name as transliterated], Russian Navy commander in Chief Feliks Gromov, and Ukrainian Vice Premier Vasyl Durdynets, but even the wife of the Ukrainian president and his close relations to whom the Black Sea seamen allegedly failed to pay special attention during the celebration of the recent Navy Day in Sevastopol.

Admiral Baltin's secret and overt enemies have an ally in Sevastopol itself. The city's mayor, Viktor Semenov, who has dreamed of "removing" the Black Sea Fleet commander since 1994 when the former basketball player and teacher was still only a candidate for the post of mayor, spurned no one's support, and fought for the indivisibility of the fleet and for Russian status for Sevastopol, can with full justification be considered an enemy.

Next we cite an extract from a tape recording which has come into the author's possession of a talk between Viktor Semenov and Yevgeniy Podanev, the leader of the Christian Liberal Party, a fabulously wealthy man later killed in a mafia score-settling. This talk took place in May 1994 at Podanev's dacha. "Podanev: Baltin, that (obscenity) man is a disaster. Semenov: Perhaps, but shall I tell you something no one knows? There are options for replacing him....I have good relations with Grachev.... There is an option for replacing him.... I have already decided.... Podanev: He must be removed. Semenov: We shall remove him, we shall. Podanev: We must a normal, good commander in...."

Fundamental differences on questions of cooperation between the Black Sea Fleet and the city only intensified after Semenov's election as mayor of Sevastopol. Here is the resolution printed by the thoroughly arrogant mayor on an order from the Black Sea Fleet commander concerning an ordinary question of collaboration with the city authorities (we have a copy of the document): "N.M. Glushko (chairman of the city soviet executive committee — author).... Prepare a letter addressed to V.S. Chernomyrdin.... (A similar letter to P.S. Grachev). It is we and not Baltin who will establish the procedure. The information should be brought to the attention of Y.K. Marchuk (Ukrainian prime minister — author) and V.V. Durdynets (Ukrainian vice premier for questions of state security — author)...." It may seem from the resolution that it is a case of the start of a new war. In actual fact the question under discussion was the transfer of the fleet's housing stock to the city....

It is reliably known that the Sevastopol mayor went so far as to collect compromising material against the fleet commander. Since the righteously indignant mayor could find nothing criminal about the admiral, on instructions the city soviet information structures carefully selected and put into a special file all the statements and interviews of the Black Sea Fleet commander (and in Eduard Baltin's three years in this post there had been quite a few of them) with the slightest political tinge. The file of newspaper cuttings was handed to Leonid Kuchma during a personal meeting between Viktor Semenov and the Ukrainian president.... We do not know whether the latter presented this "documentary evidence" to Boris Yeltsin. The result of the president's meeting is known, and it speaks for itself. "A military man must do his job and not engage in politics," Leonid Kuchma was to explain to journalists later.

Taking advantage of the situation, Viktor Semenov signed an illegal directive in fact taking from the fleet the released housing which belonged to it and is unhesitatingly sharing with the Ukrainian Navy establishments still occupied by the Black Sea Fleet which it is not planned to release. A dreadful fuss is under way over the fleet's as yet unprivatized assets. Most likely Admiral Baltin is well informed about this. But he is already packing his bags, as they say.

Russia: Arkhangelsk Wants Cut From Plesetsk Satellites

LD0802205196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1658 GMT 8 Sep 96

[By Vladimir Anufriyev]

[FBIS Translated Text] Arkhangelsk, 8 February (ITAR-TASS) — The Arkhangelsk Territory is demanding its share of commercial orbital launches of satellites from the Plesetsk launching pad which is situated on the territory. The head of the territory administration Pavel Balakshin said there should be no commercial launches until the Territory starts receiving compensation payments.

Russia: Siberian Aircraft Facility Threatened With Closure

MM0802130296 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 3 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Aleksandr Veklich under the "Dire Warning" rubric: "Left in a Blockade. Unique Aviation Enterprise Unable Even To Send Out SOS"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An aircraft repair plant in Siberia has been cut off from the outside world. Novosibirsk communications workers cut off the telephones of the only enterprise in Russia repairing aircraft for the Air Defense Forces because it has not paid its bills. So that in an emergency the plant workers are even denied the opportunity to call out the fire-fighters or call an ambulance. It seems that the enterprise, whose workshops were turning out combat aircraft during the Great Patriotic War years, is coming to the end of its days.

Since June 1995 all work in the plant's shops has been halted. Sophisticated combat aircraft in need of overhaul and with Air Defense air force units waiting for them stand ice-bound on the snowed-up flight-lines. But the aircraft repair plant has only debts — more than 2 billion rubles [R] of them. Servicemen's pay and civilian workers' wages have not been paid since October 1995. The majority of specialists have been forced to take unpaid administrative leave. Many have already found themselves other jobs with regular pay.

According to plant manager Colonel Ivan Volchek, the enterprise had orders for refitting winged aircraft from June of last year totaling R4.8 billion. But the state had not actually come up with the money. Meanwhile the officers and remaining civilian personnel working at the plant are fighting to keep the shops open with admirable determination, at times fainting from hunger.

Col. Volchek talked about the snow clearers and engines produced at the plant for clearing snow from runways. However, the military airmen who need these products do not have the money to buy them either. The plant boiler room has not stopped working yet. Incidentally, the plant workers supply heat not only for themselves but also for a nearby garrison, neighboring residential buildings (one of which houses the municipal polyclinic), and residents of the "Sibsantekhnika" plant workers' compound. You could say that they do this free of charge.

In short, the enterprise is holding on for dear life, but it is still helping others. What will now become of this unique aircraft repair enterprise?

Economic Issues

Russia: Election-Oriented Spending Jeopardizes 1996 Budget

MK0802143796 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Elmar Murtazayev: "How To Fit the Shift Toward 'Domestic Producers' Into the Budget. Viktor Chernomyrdin Held an Unscheduled Conference"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Federation Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin yesterday held a closed conference on the execution of the federal budget. In addition to the head of government, First Deputy Premier Vladimir Kadannikov; Central Bank Chairman Sergey Dubinin; and Finance Minister Vladimir Panskov and two of his first deputies, Andrey Vavilov and Vitaliy Artyukhov, took part in the conference.

The conference was unscheduled: Earlier it was expected that during his two-day visit to Moscow from his vacation the premier would take part in a Security Council session and hold negotiations with the Danish prime minister. According to SEGODNYA's sources, the conference discussed the federal budget, wage and pension arrears, and upcoming negotiations with an IMF delegation on granting Russia extended credit for 1996-1998.

The suddenness of the conference points to an extreme situation with budget revenues. The month of January, which is traditionally bad for tax revenues, in 1996 has proven especially difficult for the budget: Many regions have virtually stopped paying their taxes. In effect the government failed to meet the revenue targets from state securities placement or privatization schemes. The extension of the first IMF credit tranche, already included in the budget, is in question. And all this amid sharply increased expenditures: The disbursement of 1 trillion rubles to miners and 200 billion rubles to teachers, clearly geared to the presidential election campaign, has apparently severely strained the Finance Ministry.

Meanwhile, judging from statements by the chief of the presidential election headquarters and the head of state himself, expenditures not planned for in the 1996 budget will not stop there. Incidentally, in an interview with ITAR-TASS yesterday, First Deputy Premier Oleg Soskovets condemned "attempts by some leaders to directly transfer the practice of market relations from other countries to Russian soil" and spoke in favor of changing guidelines "toward the domestic producer."

Russia: Yasin Denies Government Printing Additional Money

LD0802215896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 8 (INTERFAX) — Russian Economics Minister Yevgeniy Yasin in an interview with INTERFAX Thursday refuted media reports claiming the government has begun printing additional money to finance current budget expenditures.

The government has "well-known mechanisms to collect funds to the budget on legal grounds," Yasin said. "We can breach neither the budget law, nor the law on the central bank which, by the way, bans it to issue centralized credits," he said.

To collect more funds, the government is distributing treasury bills which the central bank may purchase later on the secondary market, Yasin said.

The budget does not have a "fat layer," this is why maneuvers are being made through re-distribution of funds on various budget articles, Yasin said.

Delayed salaries in budget-funded bodies totalled 700 billion rubles at the end of 1995, Yasin said.

Russia: Petrov Cited on Attracting Foreign Investors

MM0802154496 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 3

[Interview with Yuriy Petrov, head of the State Investment Corporation, by Andrey Kolesnikov, date and place not given: "How To Attract Foreign Investors"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The investment climate in Russia is deteriorating with every passing year. Or, rather, it is not showing any improvement. Nonetheless, our economic leaders are promising increased investment.

Yuriy Petrov, Russia's most important investment manager and head of the State Investment Corporation, tells us how this might be brought about.

[Kolesnikov] Yuriy Vladimirovich, at a recent session of the Consultative Council for Foreign Investment the Russian leadership promised that investment would double in 1996. Given our political instability, where is that investment going to come from?

[Petrov] A doubling is not such a big deal. We are in no danger of seeing the much-touted "sell-off of Russia" happen — investment volumes are microscopic. According to official figures, Russia needs an investment level of $2 billion. But Russia's economy is capable of absorbing $20-30 billion a year. Only then will we restore our production potential. By 1985, 60-70 percent of industrial equipment was already obsolete and worn-out. Now that we have virtually stopped investing in industrial construction, the renewal of *basic funds and the position in many sectors is close to catastrophic. But doubling foreign investment — to $4 billion — is very little by our standards.

Nonetheless, there are grounds for optimism. The legislative base is becoming fuller. I am thinking of the new edition of the law "On Foreign Investment," the law on the division of output (which prompted a great deal of justifiable complaint, but now normative acts are being drawn up to flesh out some of its provisions), and the laws on concessions and on free economic zones. Substantial changes will also be needed to tax legislation. Thank God, everyone now at least has some understanding of the fact that we will have to normalize our legislation.

My opinion is clear-cut and definite — foreign investors need not just preferential but extrapreferential arrangements. Today we have to battle for foreign capital. I often meet with foreign partners and they say openly: "Mr. Petrov, just why should we go into Russia with its political instability, changing legislation, and terrible tax system which prevents us repatriating our profits?" There are more comfortable markets — East Europe and China, whose economy received $34 billion in investment last year.

But, nonetheless, a basis has been created for "receiving" foreign investment, and mutual psychological barriers and mutual distrust have been overcome.

[Kolesnikov] Just how effective is the new system proposed by the Ministry of the Economy for attracting foreign investment?

[Petrov] It seems to me that it could become productive. The system is as follows — up to 50 percent of funds are invested by the state in clearly viable "breakthrough" projects, 20-30 percent if a project is geared toward replacing imports, and 20 percent if it is a question of an important national economic project or exports. I believe that in implementing the most important projects the state could up its holding to even 70-80 percent, thereby providing more reliable guarantees for those who want to join it in "taking a stake." There are, admittedly, a lot of unresolved issues in this area. OK, state money has been invested, but what then? Whose money is it, is there a state holding or not, does it exist in the form of shares, who will manage it? We at the State Investment Corporation are currently resolving the issue of raising 20 percent of state funds to produce ascorbic acid at a defense plant in Altay Kray. Like everyone, we are having to deal with increasing production costs, and, despite the fact that we have found investors and are putting our own money in, we have to count on state support. But even if we succeed in getting that 20 percent, we do not know whether the state will take away our shares or pass them on to someone else to manage.

It seems to me that the state could simply give the money to the investor. Because state money often "goes astray" somewhere "along the line." It could then get its money back in the form of taxes.

[Kolesnikov] How is investment, including foreign investment, currently distributed between sectors? Where are people more willing to invest?

[Petrov] A large proportion is going into the fuel and energy complex, the metallurgical and chemical industries, transportation, and port installations. Very little investment is going into the processing, light and food industries, or machine building.

In order to attract investment, we need measures of economic, not administrative, regulation. For example, why not create more favorable arrangements for enterprises in the processing industry, storage depot enterprises, or for social projects? All these are elements of the investment policy which the state is very belatedly putting in place.

There is also, incidentally, the problem of management. I have repeatedly had to raise the question of the need for a special vice premier position to deal with issues of investment policy and restructuring.

[Kolesnikov] How do you square your social-democratic political views with such a liberal position on maximum openness for the Russian economy?

[Petrov] This is not a question of political views and predilections but of a professional approach to the problem. Currently up to 40 percent of property in the developed countries is owned by foreign investors;

of this, 20 percent is portfolio investment, while the other 20 percent is direct investment in production. It is impossible to make an economic breakthrough using domestic sources alone. It is very important to bring new technologies and management methods to Russia. For too long we were a closed society and kept ourselves to ourselves — that is why we are uncompetitive. We need to realize that if foreign investors make less money here than in other countries, they will never invest here. On the other hand, there have to be certain restrictions in specific sectors nonetheless.

[Kolesnikov] How would you generally rate the activity of the State Investment Corporation and the Russian Finance Corporation headed by Andrey Nechayev? What are the prospects for investment corporations of this sort?

[Petrov] The three years that investment structures have been operating have shown that they are justifying their existence. And if the state had used us more actively as a testbed for new investment mechanisms, we could have moved considerably further ahead.

For instance, we set up a company to insure investments against political risk, but its capital is just $90 million — how can we operate with that? Incidentally, most insurance companies in Russia have microscopically small amounts of capital. There should be prospects for amalgamating them. Similar companies in the West control billions of dollars. I cannot say that we are working the way we would like. We need the state's attention and support. Nechayev's corporation is also short of resources and lacks attention from state organs. The overall not entirely favorable investment climate is also having a negative impact on the effectiveness of our work. But, nonetheless, the decision to set up the investment corporations was the right one.

We have set up the "Inkorbank," which we plan to make the first investment bank. It should deal with project finance, lending, and project monitoring, and work for the stock market.

We are not going down the road of setting up share funds [payevoy fond], because we cannot promise people the things that the various pyramid structures promise. After all, today there are no realistic projects where the population could build up its funds. So we are continuing to operate under the Ministry of the Economy investment arrangements, and the finance company we have set up is currently dealing only with the stock market.

We do not want to deceive the population. After all, it is better to do nothing than to get things wrong *once.

Russia: Ongoing Plight of Sugar Industry Viewed

MM0802141096 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 5

["Economics Desk Commentary": "Bitter Dependence"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Last year turned out to be the "year of the sugar beet," according to specialists. Compared with the previous year gross harvests of the sweet roots rose by around 30-40 percent along with sugar refining using Russian raw sugar. We might have taken delight in this had we forgotten that, even taking last year's growth into account, the sector was back to the level of the seventies in terms of the main indicators. Last season the 2 million tonnes of sugar produced from beets represented a 1.5-fold decrease on the quantity obtained during the 1989-1991 season.

The decline in this important sector is primarily the result of the alarming situation in national sugar-beet farming. During the "reform" years virtually one-third of the area sown to sugar beets has been lost. The yield has dropped owing to the beet farmers' diminishing supply of equipment, fertilizers, and plant protection agents. We can only dream of the previous gross harvest of 37 million tonnes (1989).

The situation as regards sugar production itself is complex. Over the last 10 years not a single sugar refinery has been commissioned. Over 50 percent of these enterprises' fixed capital is worn out. A considerable proportion of the equipment has now been in operation for over 20 years — double the prescribed time. Only one-third of the equipment in operation meets current technical standards. In our country no more than 70-72 percent of the sugar content of a beet is extracted, whereas at West European enterprises the figure is 82-85 percent.

The draft targeted federal "Sugar" program envisages a series of measures for developing the sector. According to specialists, its implementation will make it possible to meet 70 percent of the population's and the food enterprises' needs in terms of Russian raw sugar. But right now the government does not have the money for that. Or for paying the bulk of Russian citizens, whose purchasing power has dropped dramatically.

The result is that in recent years per capita sugar consumption has dropped from 50-51 to 29-39 kg per year. The quantity of raw sugar supplied from abroad for processing at Russian enterprises has dropped. On the other hand imports of "white" sugar, which goes directly to trading outlets, have increased. Thus many plants' capacities are being utilized to a lesser extent and at the same time unemployment among sugar refiners is rising.

You can sometimes hear people asking whether we should grow our own beets and refine our own sugar. It is said that all this can be found on the world market. You just need money to buy it. In actual fact imported sugar is not that cheap. The current prices oft $400-420 per tonne in many respects derive from various forms of support and protection of local producers' interests. Can that situation persist for long? Is there not a likelihood of a return to the reality of 1980, when the world market price of white sugar reached $750 per tonne? How then will Russia be able to buy the 6-7 million tonnes of sugar that it requires?

International Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma To Make 'Nonofficial' Visit to U.S.

WS0902101796 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0155 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Will Ritter, "Special to INTELNEWS"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb. 8 — After a surprise meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Helsinki, President Leonid Kuchma said he will visit Washington on Feb. 20 in the first-ever non-official trip of a Ukrainian president to the United States.

Rumors had circulated in Kiev that Christopher, in Finland for scheduled talks with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, would also meet Kuchma, but nothing had been announced in advance.

Analysts said the U.S. wanted to probe Kuchma for the results of his talks in Kiev last week with Primakov, who was appointed last month and is expected to author a more aggressive Russian foreign policy toward the CIS countries.

Kuchma was invited to the U.S. by Freedom House, a private organization for human rights protection. Freedom House's permanent representation in Ukraine was opened in 1994 and at present the institution cooperates with private Ukrainian organizations. Although the trip is not official, the Foreign Ministry said Kuchma will meet with President Bill Clinton, Vice President Albert Gore, Christopher, and the heads of the Treasury and Defense Departments. Issues on bilateral relations, economic reforms and democratic changes in Ukraine are planned to be discussed.

Kuchma is also scheduled to meet with the chiefs of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

On Feb. 21 a reception will be given in honor of Kuchma in Washington, and he will deliver a speech on "the process of democratization in Ukraine as a factor of strengthening of stability in Europe."

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko and Presidential Chief of Staff Dmytro Tabachnyk were present at Thursday's meeting with Christopher.

Ukraine: Troops Ready for IFOR Operations

WS0802131196 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0809 GMT 8 Feb 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As UKRINFORM's correspondent in Brussels, Belgium, reported, Ukrainian Ambassador to the Benelux nations Borys Tarasyuk met there with the Belgian Defense Minister. The meeting focused on the IFOR deployment in East Slavonia. The Belgian Defense Minister was reported to have given a very high appraisal of Ukraine's readiness to take part in IFOR operations in East Slavonia.

Ukraine: Rukh Chairman Chornovil on Relations With Russia, CIS

MK0902081896 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 8 Feb 96 p 3

[Interview with Vyacheslav Chornovil, chairman of People's Rukh movement, by Konstantin Ugodnikov: "CIS Not Needed by Either Ukraine or Russia"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent met with Vyacheslav Chornovil, the leader of one of Ukraine's largest public movements, chairman of the People's Rukh, and a member of the presidium of the country's Verkhovna Rada [parliament].

[Ugodnikov] Vyacheslav Maksimovich [Chornovil], how do you assess Ukraine's role in the CIS, and what do you think should be done in order for the Commonwealth to take clearer form?

[Chornovil] I generally think that the CIS's existence is undesirable for either Russia or Ukraine. Even its great admirers will never succeed in restoring the empire. It would be much more beneficial for our countries to participate in the European integration process. I think it is my duty to note that I was against admitting your country to the Council of Europe (My stance is attributable to the Chechnya problem first and foremost). Furthermore, we are worried over the decision of the previous Russian Federation State Duma on Russian status for Sevastopol and actions by some officials such as Mayor of Moscow Yuriy Luzhkov. His statement about Sevastopol being a Moscow prefecture is discourteous with regard to Ukraine, I think. We did not speak out in favor of a general denial of admission for Russia, but for postponing the question for another indefinite period. Russia is a big, strong state that should join European structures.

Furthermore, it is necessary to exclude from the Russian political vocabulary the terms "near abroad" and "far abroad" and to stop humiliating its neighbors. As far as I am concerned, Tajikistan, for example, is a more distant abroad than, say, Poland or Hungary.

That is to say, our countries ought to reorient their efforts so as to join Europe rather than to artificially rebuild the Soviet Union.

[Ugodnikov] In other words, integration with the European Union, rather than with the Commonwealth, is a bigger priority for Ukraine?

[Chornovil] Precisely. Ukraine is not a member of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly; we regard this structure as a supra-state body that forgets its consultative functions. True enough, we have in our country people who are forcibly dragging the republic to join the Commonwealth. The Supreme Council [Verkhovna Rada] considered the question of joining the Interparliamentary Assembly 12 times, and each time we managed to prevent this; as for the other questions, Ukraine is more an observer than a participant.

We are not in any military structures.

[Ugodnikov] How would you account then for Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma's recent proposal to have Boris Yeltsin once again elected chairman of the Council of the Heads of State?

[Chornovil] This is above all political support for the Russian president before the elections. On the other hand, we hope that this will speed the process of signing a wide-ranging treaty.

[Ugodnikov] The signing of this document is being prevented by yet another problem — the Black Sea Fleet.

[Chornovil] You know, let's face reality. It is necessary for Ukraine's parliament to pass a law on the status of foreign troops on its territory. Russia must finally recognize that Crimea and Sevastopol belong to Ukraine. The Russian side would not even hear of leasing naval bases in Crimea. They are reserving some special status for the city and would not hear the word "leasing." The impression is that Russia needs not so much the Black Sea Fleet, which in its present shape is less than battleworthy, as a thorn in Ukraine's side. As for separate bases, Sevastopol has four bays. In our country, too, we have forces opposing the signing of the treaty. We do not understand them either. Indeed, to date our relations have been based on two main documents — the November 1990 treaty between the USSR and the RSFSR, and the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements. This is simply not serious. It is necessary to transition to interstate relations. It is impossible to link them to the fleet problem.

[Ugodnikov] Your position on the political integration of Russia and Ukraine is clear. As regards the economy, how do you see cooperation in this area?

[Chornovil] Russia and Ukraine are very closely linked economically. Ukraine cannot manage without Russia as, indeed, Russia cannot manage without Ukraine. Our country is interested in Russian oil, gas, and technology. Russia is interested in using gas pipelines and gas storage facilities located on Ukraine's territory. There should be cooperation in the field of military conversion, the chemical industry, the processing of agricultural produce, and oil refining. To boost such cooperation, it is simply essential to exchange most-favored-nation status and end double taxation. We have similar agreements with Poland, Germany, and France. This should be done on a bilateral basis. We are going to cooperate with Tajikistan and Turkmenistan separately, directly.

[Ugodnikov] Russia is known to be extremely sensitive about the issue of NATO's eastward expansion. What is your position on this matter?

[Chornovil] I was the first in Ukraine to state that we do not have to fear NATO's expansion at all. This was some three years ago. Even some democrats pounced on me at that time. Later this idea was repeated by Leonid Kuchma. It is necessary that NATO should not only expand, but also be transformed into a collective security system. Russia's relations with this organization should match its rank. It would not be bad if Russia were to join it rather than creating another bloc on the basis of the Tashkent pact.

Ukraine: Kuchma on Restoring Ties With Former Soviet Republics

LD0902000296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2247 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] HELSINKI, Feb 8 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukraine will pursue an active policy aimed at restoring mutually-beneficial ties with former Soviet republics, establish and advance new relations, and promote the strengthening of links within the CIS, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma declared Thursday [8 February] in the Finnish capital Helsinki where he is on an official visit.

"As for relations with Russia, we pursue a steady policy of improving and finetuning them. But these relations must be based on mutual respect, understanding and equality," the president said.

These principles, he added, are recorded in the full-scale political treaty between the two countries waiting to be signed.

Kuchma said the Ukrainian leadership finds it extremely important to establish a constructive relationship between Russia and European structures.

In his opinion the general political climate in Europe largely depends on this.

Ukraine: Marchuk: Oil Transport Talks Continue With Russia

LD0802175896 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1430 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — Talks with Russia on the cost of transiting Russian oil across Ukrainian territory through the Druzhba pipeline have not broken off, but will be continued in order to coordinate tariffs, Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk said at a news conference on 8 February.

According to him, when discussing the issue of gas supplies for Ukraine in 1996, Ukraine proceeded from the position that state structures will provide gas to housing and utilities services and the population, while commercial structures will provide gas to enterprises. Russia insisted on government guarantees for payments for gas supplies to Ukraine.

Yevhen Marchuk said that the contract for gas supplies to Ukraine, signed by the head of Ukrhazprom, diverges from the Ukrainian Government's conceptual approaches and that is why some positions are now being coordinated with Russia.

Ukraine: Gas Supplies Continue Despite Pipeline Explosion

WS0902110596 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0155 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb. 7 — Tuesday's [6 February] explosion and fire at a gas pipeline near Lugansk has not hampered the supply of natural gas to Ukraine and Russia, according to a Ukrainian Civil Defense spokesman.

An explosion damaged the main pipeline section at the Northern Caucasus-Center on Tuesday morning, setting natural gas aflame in the main pipeline section near the northeastern outskirts of Lugansk.

The fire was localized at 10:30 A.M., and according to preliminary reports, there were no injuries or significant damages. Civil Defense Headquarters announced that pressure in the pipeline has fixed at 49.6 atmospheres, which is considered to be within normal limits, and gas volumes have not been significantly reduced. A special commission was formed to investigate the incident, which occurred in one of the five branch lines feeding the southern regions of Russia. According to headquarters, the remaining lines are sufficient to meet the Russian gas requirements.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Marchuk Comments on Constitution, Arms Reduction

LD0802172496 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1230 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — At a news conference today, Ukrainian Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk noted that the following issues are now in the Ukrainian Government's field of vision: Adoption of the state budget for 1996 and a program for Ukraine's economic development. The second issue concerning the government is structural reconstruction of the economy, and the third issue is the agro-industrial complex.

Replying to journalists' questions regarding Marchuk's attitude to the draft constitution, which is being worked on now, he noted: "I have become used to expressing my opinion on documents, which are already in a complete form, but one cannot say this about the draft constitution as yet. I will definitely make my opinion known once work on it has been completed. As prime minister, I am especially interested, above all in how the division of executive power will be written into the draft constitution."

After the news conference, Marchuk was asked whether Ukraine is considerably ahead of schedule in reducing arms, but he neither confirmed nor denied the information.

Ukraine: Marchuk Says Coal Strike Becoming Political Action

LD0802220196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Feb 8 (Interfax - Ukraine) — The coal strike in Ukraine is growing into an organized political action, Ukrainian Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk told a press conference in Kiev Thursday.

"Over recent days, the strikers made miners at a few more pits join them," Marchuk said.

The government will not make any economic decisions under pressure, "not out of caprice, but because of the actual state of affairs in the country's economy," he said.

"Serious economic decisions will not be made in the town square," Marchuk said.

As many as 82 coal pits are at a standstill, while another 85 are not delivering coal to consumers Thursday, the nationwide strike committee said.

According to the Ministry of Coal Industry, only 44 pits employing 4,737 miners were idle Thursday.

Ukraine: Unions Accuse Government of Not Abiding Agreement

LD0802214096 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian
1800 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — Having discussed the course of implementation of the General Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and Ukraine's trade union organizations of 1995 at its meeting, the presidium of the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine [FTUU] noted that owing to the unconstructive stance of the Cabinet of Ministers and unsatisfactory work by ministries and departments 16 pledges are not being implemented. Among them are: the payments crisis, wage arrears, the lack of status for the unemployed and so on, UNIAN learned from the press service of the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine on 8 February.

The presidium of the FTUU acknowledged that the Cabinet of Ministers was failing to carry out its obligations concerning the general agreement. A resolution approved by the presidium demanded that the government should discipline officials who had not implemented the obligations on the timely payment of wages, should warn it of delays in the future and draw up a time-table for settling the debt with state-financed organizations within a timescale established by the Supreme Council.

The presidium of the FTUU sent a letter to its union organizations asking them to decide whether they are taking part in the all-Ukrainian protest action in the form of one-hour work stoppages on 21 February 1996.

Ukraine: Kuchma Crimean Envoy Denies Plans To 'Usurp' Power

WS0902110796 Kiev INTELNEWS in English
0155 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol, Feb. 7 — Addressing government leaders in Crimea this week, President Kuchma's newly-appointed representative to the region denied rumors that he would usurp the peninsula's established power base.

The new Crimean representative, 51-year-old Dmytro Stepanyuk, said he would strive to strengthen executive discipline and increase responsibility for the implementation of Presidential decrees and Parliamentary regulations.

Stepanyuk said he would attempt to resolve local issues within his provincial administration, "without making trips to Kiev," and he added, "I hope for cooperation with all political parties and movements for the revival of economic strength in Crimea." Responding to rumors that his authority might be over-shadowed by Stepanyuk's appointment, Crimean Speaker Yevhen Supruniyuk asserted his position as the top official of the peninsula, however, he expressed hope that his office might establish "coordinated and fruitful cooperation" with the President's newly-elected representative.

Ukrainian-born Stepanyuk is the former head of the Kryviy Rih Dzerzhynsk district executive committee, and a member of Parliament's Commission on Defense and State Security.

Economic Issues

Ukraine: Marchuk Urges Action To Conserve Energy Resources

WS0902101896 Kiev INTELNEWS in English
0155 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Oleksandr Pukhov, "Special to INTELNEWS"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb. 7 — With a national debt of KBV [karbovantsi] 150 trillion for energy consumption, leaders of administrations, ministries and departments have been advised to adopt urgent measures to reduce electric power consumption and meet payment deadlines.

An advisory telegram was issued on Wednesday by Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk, who said that energy limits were exceeded by 906 million kilowatt hours in January and 252 million kilowatt hours during the first six days of February, despite stipulated demands to limit consumption.

In addition, fuel suppliers and nuclear power plants are currently owed KBV209.7 trillion, and according to Marchuk, the debit has resulted in a "sharp decrease in coal, gas and mazut supplies to thermal power stations." His telegram warned that the situation will be further compounded by the sharp decline in coal supplies resulting from the current miners' strike. Current production totals 50,000 to 55,000 tons of coal daily, while the demand exceeds 110,000 tons. Marchuk advised ministries and department chiefs to immediately shift to a work regime demanding minimal energy consumption, saying, "These measures are urgently needed to preserve communal services for the population, especially under the present weather conditions throughout Ukraine."

Supporting Marchuk's call for action, Energy Minister Anatoliy Sheberstov said that the above-mentioned measures are necessary "to avoid the shutdown of nuclear power plants and the loss of energy for the communal and welfare sector." Sheberstov stressed that under the current condition of mass non-payment, 30 percent of the nation's electric power and 80 percent of its heating power is being consumed free of charge.

Furthermore, each thermal power station has observed a drop of 1,000 megawatts daily because the stations lack necessary coal stock due to the miners strike. Sheberstov warned that if nuclear power plants were to automatically shut down due to power grid failures, it could result in "catastrophic consequences", threatening "all life-support enterprises."

Ukraine: Resolution on Foreign Investment Detailed

WS0802132696 Lvov INFOBANK in English
0809 GMT 8 Feb 96

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev — Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers has passed a resolution which adds another 104 joint stock companies, state-owned enterprises and organizations to a list of businesses which should be privatized with the help of foreign investments. The State Property Fund has been ordered to make a decision regarding the privatization of these properties by 1 April 1996. As was stated in the resolution, the investment of foreign capital into the privatization of these businesses should be carried out on a competitive basis, primarily through the sale of blocks of shares to foreign investors.

Among the largest enterprises added to the list were the following: the Lutsk airport, Volhyn Oblast; the Kryvyy Rih turbine factory Konstar, the Komintern metallurgical plant in Dnepropetrovsk, the state-owned enterprise AviaAhrehat (Aviation Parts), the MetalurMash (Metallurgical Engineering) joint stock company, the Dnepropetrovsk device-manufacturing plant, the Dnepropetrovsk research plant for means of mechanization, and the VerstatoZavod (Machine Plant) manufacturing association, all in the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast; the Illich metallurgical plant in Mariupol, Donetsk Oblast; the Berdychiv machine-manufacturing plant, Zhytomyr Oblast; the TruboHaz (Gas Pipes) enterprise, Transcarpathian Oblast; the Zaporizhzhya steel melting plant and the Shovkova Nytka (Silk Thread) joint stock company in Zaporizhzhya Oblast; the KarpatNaftoMash (Carpathian Oil Engineering) and Radon joint stock companies and the Kalush tower crane factory in the Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast; the DrukMash (Printing Engineering) and HidroSyla (Hydraulic Power) joint stock companies, Kirovohrad Oblast; the Bila Tserkva tire factory, Kiev Oblast; the Halychyna oil refinery complex, Drohobych chemical factory, and Lvov's Rema radio-electronic medical apparatus plant, all in Lvov Oblast; the KonveyerMash (Conveyer Engineering) joint stock company, the Okean shipbuilding yard, and the Research Institute for Automization Systems and Information Science in Shipbuilding, all in Mykolayiv Oblast; the Rivne radio parts factory, the NaftoPromMash (Oil Industry Engineering) joint stock company and the Konotop reinforcement factory, all in Sumy Oblast; the Orhosnastka plant and the TeksTerno (Textile Ternopil) leased enterprise, both in theTernopil oblast; the Izyum optical mechanics plant and the UkrElektroMash (Ukrainian Electrical Engineering) electrical equipment plant in Khmelnytskyy Oblast; and the KhimVolokno (Artificial Fibers) and Pobidit joint stock companies in Chernivtsi Oblast.

Ukraine: Discovery, Extraction of Minerals Declines

WS0802132296 Lvov INFOBANK in English
0809 GMT 8 Feb 96

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev — In comparison with 1990, the extraction of minerals in Ukraine was on average four times lower in 1995. For instance, while the volume of oil and gas extracted five years ago totalled 60 million tons of conventional fuel (one ton of conventional fuel being the equivalent of a ton of oil or 1,000 cubic meters of gas), in 1995 this figure fell to 17 million tons. These figures were discussed during a meeting of the State Committee for Geology and the Utilization of Underground Resources held February 6 where the results of work carried out in 1995 were discussed.

The head of the committee's planning department, Volodymyr Tyshchenko, told INFOBANK that in this sense a dangerous tendency can be observed, that with each year that passes the volume of extracted minerals exceeds the volume discovered which means that Ukraine's underground natural resources are being depleted.

During the meeting it was stated that enterprises working under the State Geology Committee did carry out work as planned for 1995 regardless of the fact that they had financing for only 57 percent of that work. It had been planned that KBV [karbovantsi] 19.36 trillion would be provided from the national budget for such work but approximately KBV 10 trillion was actually made available. In 1996 the committee plans to set aside KBV 38.84 for geological exploration.

Belarus

Belarus: NATO Expansion, Role of Russia Discussed

WS0802120096 Minsk VO SLAVU RODINY in Russian 2 Feb 96 p 1

[Report on the scientific seminar "Belarusian-Russian Relations in the Context of European Security Problems", held by the Belarusian research Institute for Development and Security and the Institute of the United States and Canada of the Russian Academy of Sciences, by Alyaksandr Yahoraw, director of the Belarusian research Institute for Development and Security; place and date not given: "Common European Home, What Does It Mean Today?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **Belarusian mass media have already reported on the scientific seminar "Belarusian-Russian Relations in the Context of European Security Problems," held by the Belarusian research Institute for Development and Security and the Institute of Canada and the United States of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Representatives of Foreign and Defense Ministries of Belarus and Russia and well-known experts in the area of international relations and security participated in the work of this seminar. The aim of this article it to present primary theses drafted during the discussion of the above-mentioned issues.**

The Evolution of International Relations

After the end of the "Cold War," there emerged various viewpoints as to what kind of system of international relations had replaced the bipolar world. I think that it is too early to speak about a unipolar world led by the United States or about the revival of a bipolar world characterized by the emergence of any other country which could occupy the place of the former Soviet Union. The assessment of the current world as a prevailingly multipolar one, with several unequal "power centers" whose interaction affects developments both in individual regions and in the entire world, is most realistic. In essence, such was the world before the "Cold War" period.

But an assumption to the effect that the tendency of a unipolar development of the world prevails today is not without foundation, because only the United States can and is ready to play a leading role.

In the opinion of participants in the seminar, it is hardly possible to have a stable unipolar world. The underestimation of the role of Russia in the balancing of interests in the world is obvious. There are opportunities to strengthen Russia's position in the world, and the relevant opportunities are located primarily inside Russia itself.

Of course, Russia was and will always be a great state. Its development will inevitably and to a great extent affect the correlation of forces in the world. It is understandable that Belarus has a different international status, and, therefore, its own viewpoint on a number of developments and problems.

The end of the "Cold War" triggered the creation of a new correlation of forces in the world. Theoretically, this correlation entirely satisfies the West, because the preservation of a new status quo implies the absence of any real threat to the West.

A New Design of European Security

Naturally, the seminar thoroughly discussed the role and functions of NATO in the post-confrontation period, the prospects for its transformation, and the military-political consequences of its potential expansion eastward.

In particular, it was pointed out that the process of NATO transformation is going on quite slowly, and the importance of this process should not be overestimated. This being the case, the fact that the problem of NATO expansion has lately come to the forefront, while the future of NATO itself looks quite foggy and prospects for its transformation seem very indefinite, cannot but cause concern.

The role and functions assumed by NATO and the plans for its eastward expansion make it possible to draw a conclusion that in fact a new system of European security is being formed around NATO.

If events develop in an unfavorable manner, the reaction of CIS countries to NATO expansion could be military cooperation. Clause 4 of the agreement on collective security makes it possible to do so.

Some extraordinary political measures can be taken to counteract the quick expansion of NATO. It is necessary to more actively use the opportunities of foreign policy, including targeted activities in international organizations, such as the UN and others, as well as to represent the interests of third world countries.

During the seminar, a viewwasexpressed that NATO expansion is not really important for the West, but a change in borders of the spheres of influence is. To a certain extent, this implies that Russia is "pushed out" of Europe and the borders of its influence are "reduced."

Belarus-Russia: Problems and Prospects

Pondering the current state of Russian-Belarusian relations, the participants in the seminar outlined the contours of current knotty problems.

The current state of Belarusian-Russian bilateral relations cannot be regarded as entirely satisfactory. Many agreements signed between Russia and Belarus do not lead to the expected positive results. This primarily refers to our economic cooperation.

According to assessments by Belarusian participants, political, economic, and military relations between Belarus and Russia are currently developing unevenly, but military cooperation remains steady. Due to this, it was pointed out that interaction in economic, political, and military areas must be resolved as part of a complex whole. Cooperation in the military area cannot be full-fledged if relations in other spheres do not develop adequately..

At the same time, some participants in the seminar said that even Belarusian-Russian relations in the military sphere cannot be called satisfactory. Quite a few agreements and documents — both within the CIS framework and at the bilateral level — have been signed. Regrettably, the majority of them are not effective due to the absence of an implementation mechanism. The terms of some agreements raise the question: Does Russia have a genuine interest in being a partner of Belarus?

It was pointed out that Belarus and Russia have common strategic objectives. Due to the fact that the complex of threats for both countries is almost the same, Belarus and Russia are natural strategic partners. Due to a number of factors, Belarus cannot stay apart from threats to Russia.

At the same time, another viewpoint was made public: According to it, strategic partnership between Russia and Belarus is caused not by external factors but by internal factors of our "indivisibility." This refers primarily to the economic and sociocultural community between the peoples of our states.

Participants in the seminar were unanimous in the opinion that the partnership should not be declared, but an effective mechanism for its realization must be established. Being sovereign states, Belarus and Russia must establish an effective mechanism for implementing the interaction between the interested ministries and departments and economic entities of both countries, and create relevant conditions for real cooperation.

An interesting position was outlined at the seminar: Relevant experience of other countries can be assumed as a basis for special relations between Russia and Belarus. These special relations between Russia and Belarus can be implemented particularly through the establishment of a permanent mechanism for conducting bilateral consultations at various levels. The status of special relations should be enshrined at the highest political level.

A viewpoint was also voiced that legislatures of our countries could play an important role in strengthening bilateral cooperation. One of the steps in this direction could be the creation of "Russia" and "Belarus" factions in the Belarusian Supreme Soviet and Russian Duma, respectively.

The participants in the seminar stressed the importance of such meetings for unofficial discussion of problems of bilateral relations by representatives of governmental institutions, research institutes, experts and leading specialists of Belarus and Russia. Unofficial meetings and informal discussions held by the people who can influence the adoption of important decisions can contribute considerably to the strengthening of Belarusian-Russian relations.

Belarus: Russia Asked To Not Denounce CIS Founding Document

LD0802235596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, Feb 8 (Interfax-West) — Russia cannot unilaterally denounce the agreements on creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States signed in Belaya Vezha in 1991, deputy of Belarus' Supreme Soviet and first secretary of the Central Committee of the republic's Communist Party Sergey Kalyakin told Interfax Thursday.

"In the worst case Russia may find herself in an unclear position, neither in the Commonwealth, nor in the collapsed USSR. The agreements concluded within the CIS in the economic sphere and in the sphere of human rights will automatically be annulled."

Kalyakin was cautious about a statement by Russian Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov favoring annulment of the Belaya Vezha agreements. "Decisions on transformation of the CIS into a new entity should be prepared and adopted before total denunciation [of the original agreements]."

"Communist parties of Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Armenia have already coordinated the mechanism of these transformations," Kalyakin said.

Former head of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet, deputy of the republic's parliament Stanislav Shushkevich says he does not view "Zyuganov's statements on the intention to denounce the Belaya Vezha agreement as lawful." He believes that as the decision on the creation of the Commonwealth was ratified by parliaments of the majority republics of the former USSR, "Russia alone cannot denounce them."

Chairman of the parliamentary commission on international affairs (Belarus' ex-foreign minister) Petr Kravchenko assessed Zyuganov's statements as "a gift to national-radicals of Ukraine and other republics."

"Denunciation is a double-edged sword," Kravchenko said. It can lead to strengthening integration between some states of the Commonwealth and simultaneous distancing of other states.

Belarus: President Reaches 'Mutual Understanding' With IMF

WS0802132396 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0800 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] During his meeting with the IMF executive director [name indistinct] and the Belarusian representative to the IMF Board of Directors, Mr. Nikitsenka, Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka discussed the prospects for strengthening cooperation between Belarus and the IMF and deepening the financial support for the Republic's anticrisis economic program. According to the Presidential Press Service, the sides reached mutual understanding regarding the need for financial aid to Belarus by the IMF, the reduction of the inflation rate to a minimal level, and the creation of a favorable investment environment for domestic and foreign investors. The sides agreed to hold mutual consultations.

Belarus: Government Urged To Retain Holdings in Oil Companies

LD0802210596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1824 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, February 8 (Itar-Tass) — The government should retain its holdings in Belarus' oil companies, the president of the Belarusian state-owned oil concern, Anton Loyko, said at a news conference here today.

The republic's oil sector needs renovation loans and raw materials from Russian oil companies, Loyko said.

He cited the numerous controversial rumours which go that the Belarusian government made an oil refining and export accord with Russian Lukoil and Yukos oil companies. Another deal was with Russia's Slavneft which undertakes to renovate Belarus' Mozyrskiy refinery. Loyko explained that the two accords seek loans and renovation assistance for Belarusian oil productions.

Russia's side of the bargain is to put the Belarusian refineries to work and provide petroleum products to the republic.

Moldova

Moldova: Defense Officials Brief Press on Dniester, Budget

AU0802132496 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, February 7 (INFOTAG) — The Moldovan Ministry of Defence believes that handing of a part of former 14th Army's property over to Moldovan Armed Forces is a problem to be solved by Russia itself. That was stated at a press conference held in the ministry today.

As stipulated by appropriate inter-governmental agreements signed by Chisinau and Moscow, the evacuation of Russian engineer machinery from Dniester has been launched recently, said Lieutenant Colonel Nicolae Turtureanu, head of the ministry's Foreign Policy and External Relations Department.

He abstained from commenting the Monday's statement made by Lieutenant General Valeriy Yevnevich, commander of the Russian Contingent in Dniester, who blamed Chisinau for its failure to provide railway trains so that he could load the engineer machinery and ship it to Russia.

"For me, this is an absolutely new position. I can only state that Moldova has been accurate in fulfilling its obligations. Delays may only be caused by one reason: Parallel to dispatching the machinery to Russia, Yevnevich is supposed to ship a part of it to Moldova, which he does not do. Besides that, the mechanism of such a handing over has not yet been agreed by sides," Turtureanu said.

"We offered our variant of transfer which was declined by Moscow. At present, the government is working out a new project which will then be negotiated by Moldovan and Russian military experts," explained Brigadier General Ion Nani, deputy minister of defence.

He confirmed that the evacuation of the Russian engineer equipment had been suspended till the sides agree on the terms of its partial transfer to the Republic of Moldova. In his words, Russia cannot ship anything without Chisinau's consent, as envisaged by agreements on machinery evacuation and transit via Ukraine.

"Fulfillment of the inter-government Army Withdrawal Agreement is a matter of honour for Russia. The document does not specify how a part of the equipment will be handed over to Moldova, but the former Soviet Armed Forces respected one old tradition: The giver delivers the stuff to where the receiver says. That is why we believe it is Russia's problem," the deputy minister emphasized.

Earlier, Lieutenant General Yevnevich stated that he was ready to hand over to Moldova the agreement-stipulated portion of the engineer equipment, but, as he put it, Chisinau representatives were supposed to come to Tiraspol and receive and transport the stuff by themselves.

The financing of the Moldovan Armed Forces in 1995 hardly covered 50 percent of their real needs. The investment envisaged by the 1996 budget will be only slightly higher than previously, stated Colonel Pavel Puiu, chief of the Economy Department of the Ministry of Defence, at today's press conference.

Monetarily, defence allocations will be somewhat higher this year, but their percentage in the state budget is lower than in the previous year. Namely, the 1995 budget envisaged 66.9 million lei for defence, or 3.2 percent of the budget overall size, or 0.8 percent of the GDP, though in reality the military received only 59.1 million lei. The 1996 budget envisages 72.2 million, or 2.9 percent of the budget size, or 0.7 percent of the GDP.

Unlike many other state structures, the Armed Forces have no alternative sources of money earning, Colonel Puiu said. The ministry does run several small factories of its own, but their current performance does not allow to count on any revenues. Deputy Minister Ion Nani has informed that a special governmental commission had been settled recently made up of experts from the Ministries of Defence, Privatization, and some other, who will tackle the sales of various machinery which belongs to the military and is in excess amounts. The Ministry of Defence may count on 30 percent of revenues.

Moldova: Snegur: Diplomatic Efforts Help Negotiations With Dniester

LD0902120096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1107 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By Valeriy Dimidetskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU February 9 (Itar-Tass) — Moldovan President Mircea Snegur said on Friday that diplomatic efforts had helped normalise negotiations with the leaders of the Dniester region on a settlement of the Trans-Dniester conflict.

The negotiating process, which is conducted with the mediation of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and special representatives of Russia and Ukraine, reached a deadlock at the end of last year, and the sides accused each other of unyieldingness.

After an almost two-months-long interval, Moldovan and Dniester leaders had two meetings at the end of January and early in February. It has become known to Itar-Tass that the side failed to agree on main issues such as the discussion of a Trans-Dniester region status and financial cooperation.

Mircea Snegur believes that a resumption of the dialogue has been promoted by a joint statement, signed by the Presidents of Russia, Ukraine, and Moldova during the January CIS summit to expedite a solution to the Trans-Dniester issue. Snegur is of the opinion that a certain role has been also played by the refusal of the CIS Secretariat to comply with Tiraspol leader Igor Smirnov's request to admit Trans-Dniester region to the CIS.

The President of Moldova announced that he would run for Moldova's presidency in December this year, if he is nominated "by the Party of Revival and Accord and supported by the people". His opinion is that blocs of political associations will emerge during the presidential election campaign and that independent candidates will not stand much chance to win.

Expressing his attitude to NATO's possible eastward expansion, Mircea Snegur emphasised that this process does not infringe on the security of Moldova, which cooperates with the North Atlantic Alliance under the Partnership for Peace programme, maintaining its neutrality.

Moldova: Popov Sees No Change in Foreign Policy

AU0802204896 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, February 7 (INFOTAG) — Moldova's external policy shall not change this year, stated Mihai Popov, minister of foreign affairs. "The ministry spares no efforts to implement and strictly observe provisions of the country's External Policy Concept adopted by the Parliament last year," Mr. Popov told INFOTAG.

"I believe, it is very important to consolidate a legal framework for developing our cooperation with all countries. This year, our priorities will remain unchanged: further strengthening of relations with neighbour states — Ukraine, Romania, Belarus and Russia," he emphasized.

In his opinion, it is necessary to pay more attention to shaping a more rational image of Moldova as a state building a new relationship in its society. In particular, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is interested in the economic reform experience gained in Czechia, Slovenia, and some other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Moldova has scheduled to sign very important documents with them, which are to cover political, economic and cultural spheres.

Jointly with the Ministry of Economy, the Moldovan diplomatic corps will soon shape economic priorities in the country's external policy, and tasks to be assigned to diplomatic missions working abroad concerning deepening and diversifying bilateral economic relations.

"It is our duty to timely inform state structures on priority economic directions in Moldova's relations with developed nations," Popov said.

Last week, the Parliament approved the country's foreign policy course for 1996.

Moldova: Snegur, Smirnov Discuss 'Mainly' Financial Issues

AU0802204396 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 7 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tiraspol, February 7 (INFOTAG) — Chisinau and Tiraspol leaders did not raise status issues at their summit held here today, journalists were told after the meeting. According to Yelena Yefimova, press secretary of the Dniester president and government, the sides put emphasis mainly on financial and monetary questions.

Tiraspol leaders were suggesting to proceed from the assumption that there exist two different financial-monetary systems, and were insisting on the delivery of the new Dniester cash from Germany, where it has been printed, to Tiraspol.

In their turn, Moldovan leaders confirmed their old stance concerning the inadmissibility of introducing the new Dniester rubles, which are, in fact, nothing but a new currency unit. Chisinau again proposed to cover the cash deficit in the region by introducing the Moldovan leu, as stipulated by the July 5 bilateral agreement. However, Tiraspol bosses replied that the leu is already causing considerable problems even in non-cash settlements, and bringing in the Moldovan cash "is just impossible before the political status problem is finally solved."

According to Yefimova, one cannot say that the sides remained on their old monetary-financial positions. "The leaders have agreed to urge expert teams to speed up the work in order to reach a mutually acceptable compromise."

The only document the sides managed to sign today was a protocol on interaction in customs issues. Without disclosing its essence, President Igor Smirnov told the media that "it was not at all easy to reach the agreement. However, the protocol has been signed — with a full account of the existing situation."

He said he was satisfied with the summit results, and that "step by step our positions are getting closer to each other."

This opinion was backed by President Snegur, who said, "a normal negotiation process is going on." In his belief, one more step has been made towards solving the key question, and stressed that at the next summit, scheduled for March 11 in Tiraspol again, the Moldovan leadership would arrive "with new initiatives that will give a new impulse to the negotiation process."

Besides Snegur and Smirnov, the meeting was attended by parliament chairmen, deputy prime ministers, heads of central banks, and heads of both expert teams, as well as international mediators — the OSCE [Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe] Permanent Mission at Moldova, and the plenipotentiary representatives of the Russian and Ukrainian presidents.

Moldova: Snegur Initiative on Official Language Rejected

AU0902122496 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1000 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A few minutes ago the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova rejected, by a majority of votes, President Mircea Snegur's initiative on altering the Constitution articles referring to the name of the official language of the country. The draft law which was turned down stipulated turning the term Moldovan language into Romanian language.

During the debates 13 deputies took the floor representing both the majority faction and the opposition.

Parliament Speaker Petru Lucinschi proposed to the deputies to accept that both names of the official language should have circulation value on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. President Snegur, however, rejected any compromise formula, asserting that there exists a sole scientific truth regarding the name of the Romanian language, as the language spoken in the Republic of Moldova, and that making official the Moldovan language represents a mistaken and antinational action, reports our Chisinau correspondent, Valentin Tigau.

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Chinese-Kazakh Rail Cooperation Discussed

LD0802182396 Almaty KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 25 Jan 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] As is known, the Almaty Railway Department is at 127 Furmanov Street in Almaty. A meeting of heads of delegations of seven states of Europe and Asia was held here at the beginning of the second week of January with the aim of signing fundamentally important documents relating to transit, freight, and container shipments by rail through the Druzhba-Alataw-Shankou [Kazakh-Chinese border] crossing. Here we have it — the plan for the main Trans-Asian and Eurasian railway lines, ending at one end at Lianyungang seaport on the Yellow Sea, and at the other at Istanbul on the Black Sea, London (Amsterdam) on the North Sea, and Helsinki (Tallinn, St.-Petersburg) on the Baltic Sea. During the three days of negotiations preceding the signing of agreements, the attention of those who took part often turned to this plan — each raising the problems of their own country in connection with it. Amangeldy D. Omarov, the head of Almaty railways, called the negotiations, which he initiated, of historic importance for the economy of the republic. Thanks to them, reforms are not skidding on the country's railway tracks. [passage omitted]

As is known, the Chinese and Kazakh sections of the main line were joined in September 1990. [passage omitted]

Amangeldy Omarov has made many working visits to China and held a number of constructive negotiations there. He noted that the pace of work on rebuilding sections of the main line built earlier and on putting into operation new ones on the territory of the People's Republic of China had increased over recent years. So, new tracks were put into operation along the Lanzhou-Urumqi (2,300 km) section in the first half of 1995 and not in 1998, as was planned. Construction of a plant that will produce large 20-40 foot freight containers has started.

Ma Yunlin, the head of the Chinese railway delegation, noted that the volume of container shipments doubled last year. The Chinese party at the meeting was represented by three delegations: The Directorate of the Division for Shipment of Containers and Special Cargoes KZhVKO (company for external services on the railways of the PRC), headed by Ma Yunlin, the delegation of the Xintian railway company for foreign cooperation, headed by Shi Mishang, and the delegation of the Sinotrans Luyan-Yungan Bu Tsiali company of China. This once again speaks of China's foreign economic interests in Kazakhstan and Central Asia and in broadening this springboard for development of China's trade and economic relations with Iran, Turkey, and a number of other countries of Western Asia and Western Europe. So, the Chinese Government does not regret its investments in this project as it has full confidence that it will pay for itself.

At the same time, the railways of Kazakhstan, situated in the center of Eurasia, are becoming the link both for Trans-Asian and Eurasian main lines. But this link has to be stable.

"According to the protocols signed, the setting up of international main railway lines and the prospects for growth in the volume of cargo transported on interstate lines will mean there will be special demands on the railway network of Kazakhstan," Omarov says. "So, despite the financial difficulties, the government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Almaty Railway Department are allocating funds for the development of the Druzhba station, for modernization. The first step that the state is making is to use the $78 million foreign credit (given by Japan) under government guarantees, with repayment from railway profits."

"We initiated this meeting of representatives of Kazakhstan, China, South Korea, Japan, Italy, Poland, and Estonia in order to get to know each other better, to arouse the world's interest in the negotiations taking place and a public response in our country, and the press plays a big role in this," Omarov says. "It is no secret that many people in the world still do not know the potential of the new transcontinental bridge." For it to work, we need not only constant technical servicing, but also a flow of cargo in the new direction. We sent our specialists to European countries, we spoke at the exhibition in San Diego and told the world about the new potential of our railways. In order to attract partners, we have reduced rates and have spoken in favor of setting up an international insurance company and we intend to continue electrification of the railway in the Chu-Almaty-Sary-Ozek direction [southeast Kazakhstan] and further on the other sections of the Turksib, to increase the speed and volume of shipments, and to link up with the electrified railways of Russia and China.

K.S. Sambetov, the head of the delegation from Almaty railways, its first deputy, using the chart of the main railways, explained to the participants in the negotiations what will be done in the near future in Kazakhstan to make sure the signed documents are effective. The Druzhba station itself is to be fitted with new equipment, in particular loading technology. As is known, broad tracks are replacing narrow tracks at the station. One loading terminal is already operating, but this will not be enough in the new conditions. The telecommunications systems have to be renewed, to be made more reliable. We will also have to reinforce, or even transfer, the approach to the station on the section near Lake Alakol, which is being washed away by water from the lake. And of course we will continue the electrification program. According to the railway sector, by 1998 the railways will be electrified up to Almaty. And this means the diesel locomotive fleet, which has served its time, will not have to be renewed. It will be replaced by electrified trains, which can handle the Kurday pass with no problem." [passage omitted]

Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Yeltsin Welcomes End of Conflicts

LD0802204096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DUSHANBE, Feb 8 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin welcomed the peaceful settlement of the conflicts in the Tajik towns of Kurgan-Tyube and Tursunzade.

Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov had a telephone talk with Yeltsin Thursday in which the Russian president highly appreciated the political flexibility shown by the Tajik leadership in order to avoid a new civil war, the Tajik president's press secretary Zafar Saidov told Interfax.

Yeltsin confirmed Russia's readiness to provide more humanitarian and economic aid to Tajikistan and ordered the appropriate agencies to take the necessary steps, Saidov said.

Rakhmanov thanked Yeltsin and the Russian people for the aid given to the country and emphasized that the Tajik people view Russia as a guarantor of peace and stability in the region and in the world, as well as their strategic ally.

Rakhmanov told Yeltsin that "despite certain complexities in the Pamir area, the country has stabilized," Saidov said.

Tajikistan: Rakhmanov Thanks Yeltsin for Help During Crisis

LD0802161796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1601 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Galina Gridneva, Alisher Niyazov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DUSHANBE, February 8 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov have spoken on the telephone today and discussed the situation in Tajikistan.

Tajik President's spokesman Zafar Saydov told Itar-Tass that "the Russian president had welcomed peaceful settlement of the recent crisis which developed in several regions of the republic and expressed readiness to render extra humanitarian and economic assistance to the Tajik people."

For his part, Rakhmanov "expressed his gratitude to President Yeltsin and all the Russian people for permanent and comprehensive aid to the Tajik people. Rakhmanov highly appreciated Russia's contribution to the cause of establishing peace and national accord on the Tajik soil." Rakhmanov stressed that "Tajikistan regards Russia not only as its strategic ally, but as a guarantor of peace and stability in the region."

Informing the Russian president about the situation in the country, Rakhmanov said that despite certain difficulties in the Pamir highlands, where clashes between the Tajik army and militants of the Tajik opposition continue, in general, the situation in the republic has stabilized.

Tajikistan: New Premier Outlines Government Economic Reforms

LD0802141996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1306 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Galina Gridneva and Alisher Niyazov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dushanbe, 8 Feb — The government of Tajikistan will firmly follow the chosen course of economic reforms set out in the broad-scale program of economic transformations in the republic to the year 2000 which was approved by the national parliament. This was stated by Yakhye Azimov, the government's new prime minister, at his first press conference. He was appointed to this post today by decree of President Emomali Rakhmanov in place of Jamshed Karimov who resigned.

Speaking about the economic priorities of government policy, the new prime minister said that he would restore links with old partners on the territory of the former USSR and, in particular, with the Russian Federation. The prime minister particularly stressed that integration with Russia would have priority in this process.

The government intends to undertake a number of specific measures in the social sphere, including measures aimed at resolving such social problems as raising wages, paying pensions and other benefits in order to avoid a new social explosion in the republic. However, we may not succeed in fully resolving these problems in the short term, Azimov noted.

Replying to a question from an ITAR-TASS correspondent, he acknowledged that one of the key processes - the process of privatization - is as yet proceeding in an extremely unsatisfactory manner in the republic. Therefore, the government plans urgently to step up this process and this will include speeding up the process of removing the majority of Tajikistan's enterprises from state control.

Touching on relations with the International Monetary Fund which has not yet allocated a single cent to Tajikistan, Azimov said: "We shall continue to cooperate with the IMF and we shall strive to fulfil its conditions for receiving credit." He recalled that at issue there are IMF demands such as deregulating the prices of foodstuffs.

At the same time the prime minister stressed that the government will also seek out internal sources of investment including investment in the construction of very important national economic installations.

Tajikistan: Supreme Assembly Issues Amnesty Order for Rebels

LD0802173896 Dushanbe KHOVAR in Russian 0800 GMT 8 Feb 96

['Text' of Tajik Supreme Assembly resolution offering a conditional amnesty to participants in the uprisings in Tursunzade and Kurgan-Tyube]

[FBIS Translated Text]

A General Amnesty.

Taking into account the political situation that has emerged in the republic, with the aim of ensuring peace, accord, national unity, and the protection and guarantee of state security, and having considered the demands put forward by the First Mechanized Brigade of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Tajikistan and the armed group in Tursunzade, on the basis of the principles of humanitarianism and in accordance with article 49 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Supreme Assembly of the Republic of Tajikistan resolves:

1. To exempt from criminal liability and punishment people who participated in the events which took place from 1 to 17 September 1995 in Khatlon Region and from 15 January to 4 February 1996 in Khatlon Region, the towns of Tursunzade and Khodzhent and Shahrinav and Gissar Districts.

2. Article 1 of this law does not extend to :

a) people who during those days committed separately other crimes which are not connected with those events;

b) people who participated in those events but committed crimes before them.

3. Preliminary investigation bodies and courts are:

a) to halt criminal cases relating to the people indicated in article 1 of this law;

b) to exempt from liability the people indicated in article 1 of this law.

4. This resolution comes into force in the event that the First Mechanized Brigade of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Tajikistan, under commander Mahmud Khudoyberdiyev, keeps its promise to return all forces and military equipment to their permanent locations and that the armed group in the town of Tursunzade and in Shahrinav, Gissar, and Leninskiy Districts, under Ibod Boymatov, and some groups in Districts of Khatlon Region who participated in those operations surrender their arms, equipment and military hardware to the appropriate bodies.

5. The temporary commission of the Supreme Assembly is charged with supervising the implementation of this resolution.

[Signed] Chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Republic of Tajikistan Safarali Rajabov, Dushanbe, 4 February 1996.

Tajikistan: Government Invites Opposition To Address Parliament

LD0802203496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ASHGABAT, Feb 8 (Interfax) — Tajik Foreign Minister Talbak Nazarov has invited opposition figures to address the Tajik parliament.

Nazarov told journalists that the government will guarantee safe conduct for the opposition leaders.

Both delegations at the peace talk have no power to tackle large constitutional issues on behalf of the Tajik people. The opposition had proposed dissolving parliament and convening a National Reconciliation Council.

Nazarov was confident that parliament would endorse the government's proposal.

The opposition agreed to study the proposal and respond to it on February 9.

Opposition delegation head Akbar Turadzhonzoda's only comment was that his side has not changed its position.

Ramiro Piris-Ballon, the U.N. secretary general's special envoy, was expected to submit a U.N peace plan for Tajikistan Thursday, but the heads of both delegations told journalists that this would be done at a later date.

Some observers believe that the U.N. will not present its plan before February 10 because experts in New York will need time to analyze the proposal made by the government delegation.

Confidential sources told Interfax that Turadzhonzoda had expressed doubt at the last meeting of the delegations about the government's security guarantees.

Piris-Ballon told journalists that he views the government proposals as "very positive" and said he would support any initiatives that establish direct links between the sides in the Tajik conflict.

The government initiative will in no way serve as a substitute for the talks as the main tool to resolve problems, Piris-Ballon said. He believes that the goal of the government's proposal is to involve the parliament, government and Tajik people in tackling the issues on the agenda of the talks and to tap a new source of ideas that can be useful for continuation of the talks.

Tajikistan: Defense Ministry Denies Report of Opposition Success

LD0802235196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2247 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DUSHANBE, Feb 8 (Interfax) — A senior Tajik Defense Ministry official denied reports of opposition units capturing the town of Vanj in the eastern Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Region.

The official told Interfax that there is an opposition base in Vanj. Some of the opposition fighters retreated from the battlefield in the Tavildara district 200 kilometers east of Dushanbe to Vanj across the mountains to replenish their stocks, treat the wounded and a indulge in a short rest.

The field commander who controls the area has been supporting the Islamists from the outset of the confrontation between the Islamic opposition and the official Dushanbe, the official said. He did not rule out the possibility that the opposition fighters will return to the Tavildara district to relieve their comrades there.

The official also said that Col. Makhmud Khudoberdiyev's 1st Brigade of the country's Defense Ministry has moved towards Tavildara from the southern town of Kurgan-Tyube on February 8. Khudoberdiyev and his men had rebelled in Kurgan-Tyube but returned to the barracks following a reshuffle in the country's leadership by President Emomali Rakhmanov.

Fighting between government units and opposition fighters whose number is variously estimated as 300 to 500 men has been going on in the Tavildara district Thursday.

Tajikistan: Rebels Claim More Villages Taken

LD0802135596 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] According to reports received, groups of the army of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan in Tavil-Dara continued their military operations yesterday against the regime's paramilitaries, who caused the latest conflicts, and have liberated the villages of (Yuparvi), (Shtiyon), and (Shpliyon) from the enemy. At 1700 yesterday, operations to liberate the villages of (Khunarvok) and (Yupang) were in progress. Yesterday 20 of the regime's paramilitaries were killed or injured and five were taken prisoner by the army of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan.

Since the beginning of the clashes, the mujaheddin have seized two armored cars, four heavy tanks — three T-72's and one T-66 — two short-range heavy guns, one [word indistinct], four ammunition dumps, and some provisions stores from the enemy. More than 300 men have been taken captive.

Professor Haji Akbar Turajonzoda, chairman of the negotiating delegation of the United Opposition Forces of Tajikistan, has the following view on the clashes in Tavil-Dara and the prospects for the situation in this area and on the Tehran cease-fire agreement:

[Begin recording] [Turajonzoda] Of course, the UN observers and the joint [cease-fire observance] commission had to find out why the agreement was violated. We have already said that according to our information the government forces launched a large-scale assault on positions of our mujaheddin on 5 February, and as a result of the assault they have lost about 200 men killed and 50 taken prisoner. [passage omitted]

Also, our forces have seized many [word indistinct]. This is not the point. The point is that if the agreement is nullified then the probability of clashes will appear in all other areas too. This is very dangerous for our Tajikistan. [end recording]

Tajikistan: Vanj Situation Deteriorates as Tavildara Clashes Continue

LD0802180396 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1400 GMT 8 Feb 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the latest reports from ITAR-TASS, the situation in the Pamirs district of Vanj has deteriorated seriously. Here a local armed grouping of members of the opposition has taken control of the village with the same name. Battles are also continuing in Tavildara. Members of the opposition have seized a bridge on the road from Dushanbe to Khorog and the village of Khibshon. According to some reports, official Dushanbe's losses amount to about 100 killed and wounded. The promised reinforcements have not yet arrived. The command of the government forces is not undertaking an active counterattack. Meanwhile, the fresh forces were forced to halt 120 km from Tavildara because of an avalanche and a mud slide on the road along which they were moving toward the area where the fighting was taking place.

Tajikistan: Government Forces Counterattack in Tavildara

LD0902065896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0651 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DUSHANBE February 9 (Itar-Tass) — Tajik government troops reportedly counterattacked the armed opposition in the Tavildara region at the feet of the Pamir mountains early on Friday and a sources in the Tajik Defence ministry told Tass the militants were being pushed back.

The source said the fighting was "fierce" near the settlements of Lyuliharv [spelling as received] and Khipshon [spelling as received] and heavy artillery was used there.

On Wednesday Tajik government troops retreated from their positions in Tavildara to Lyuliharv to "avoid further bloodshed and casualties among civilians".

Armenia

Armenia: Armenian Communist on Russian Statement on Karabakh

NC0802183696 Yerevan SNARK in English 0703 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, February 8 (SNARK)—In an interview with the Turkish [as published] GUNAY newspaper on January 13, 1996, Speaker of Russia's State Duma, Gennadiy Seleznev, said that Karabakh belongs to Azerbaijan. However, as referring to a telephone conversation with Valentine Kuptsov who is the Secretary of the Russian Communist Party, Sergey Badalian, First Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party, stated Seleznev had just expressed his own opinion.

According to Badalian, Armenia's Communists continue to be for the recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh as soon as possible. This is the moral obligation of Armenia, he stressed. Regarding the stance of Russian Communists he said they together with leaders of Armenian and Azeri Communists adopted a document in 1994 saying that the Karabakh conflict should be settled only through Bishkek agreements.

Badalian believes that the Armenian leaders lashed out against the Communists and are attempting to repeat the events of 1918-1920 in order to keep away from "reddening" Russia and hold the power at whatever cost. No one matter in the region can be solved without Russia, Badalian emphasized.

Armenia: Delegation Returns From Talks in Georgia

NC0802213096 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1900 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An Armenian delegation headed by Armenian Minister for Relations with the CIS, the European Union and International Financial Organizations Gagik Shahbazian returned to Yerevan from an official visit to Georgia from 6 to 7 February.

Talks were held on the development of trade and economic ties, regulation of the financial problems, and a number of projects being jointly implemented that require operational solutions.

A protocol was signed on regulating matters relating to debt payments, security on the railways, and the repair of jointly used roads.

Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze received the delegation. In noting the revival of the centuries-old traditions of friendship between the two fraternal countries and the need to renew them under the new historic conditions, Shevardnadze expressed his satisfaction with the practical ties established between the parliaments, ministries, and enterprises of the two countries.

Some members of the Armenian government delegation stayed in Tbilisi to resolve a number of urgent matters.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: Foreign Minister, Turkish Envoy Discuss Karabakh Solution

NC0802210396 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1900 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The need to speed up negotiations to resolve the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict was emphasized once again during the meeting between our Foreign Minister Gasan Gasanov and Ayhan Kamel, Turkish President Suleyman Demirel's personal representative at the talks aimed at resolving the conflict with Armenia. [words indistinct]

Briefing the Turkish diplomat on Moscow's decision to intensify its efforts in this direction, Gasanov said that not only Russia and the Minsk Group members but Turkey too should be active in this direction.

Agreeing to this view, the Turkish diplomat said that all our efforts are aimed at finding a speedy solution to this problem.

In conveying the content of (?Demirel's) letter, Ayhan Kamel said that he wants to find out the Azerbaijani leadership's views on the (?solution) of the conflict and (?discuss) Turkey's possibilities to help this process.

Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev received Ayhan Kamel today.

Let us remind you that the next round of talks on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict will be held in Helsinki at the end of this month.

Azerbaijan: Turkey To 'Hasten' Settlement of Azeri-Armenian Conflict

LD0802174096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1426 GMT 8 Feb 96

[By Sevindzh Abdullayeva, Viktor Shulman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, February 8 (Itar-Tass) — Turkey intends to hasten the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over Azerbaijan's breakaway enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, said Kamal Aihan, a special envoy of the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

Aihan arrived in Baku on Wednesday for political consultations with Azeri President Geyar Aliyev and Foreign Minister Gasan Gasanov.

The Turkish diplomat said during a meeting at the Foreign Ministry that Turkey is set to assist Armenia and Azerbaijan in settling the conflict within the framework of the Minsk group.

He will travel on to Armenia to negotiate several directions of the reconciliation process which Gasanov said had been in view.

Gasanov spelled the directions as shuttle diplomacy, recently proposed by Russia, negotiations of the parties at the Minsk group and summit meetings of the Armenian and Azeri presidents.

Azerbaijan: Aliyev Disagrees With Armenian Proposal for Karabakh

LD0802220496 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1620 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baku, 8 February (ITAR-TASS) — Azerbaijan does not agree with the proposal of the Armenian side for a two- stage settlement of the Karabakh problem: The problem must be resolved once and fundamentally. This is the opinion Azerbaijan's President Geydar Aliyev expressed in Baku this evening during political consultations with Kamal Aykhan, special envoy of the Turkish Foreign Ministry and special representative of the Turkish president.

Aykhan, who arrived in the Azerbaijani capital on Wednesday [7 February] with the task of speeding the peace process, has passed to the head of the Azerbaijani state a personal message from Suleyman Demirel, containing concrete proposals for a settlement. The proposals were not discussed when the media were present. The ITAR-TASS correspondents have learned that the proposed settlement boils down to a two-stage liberation of Azerbaijan's occupied territories.

Initially, the document provides for a withdrawal of Armenian armed formations from several areas, excluding Azerbaijan's administrative centers of Lachin and Shusha situated on the border with Armenia and inside Nagorno-Karabakh in the zone of the so-called humanitarian corridor. This operation is to be followed by the parties deciding on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. The liberation of the above-mentioned centers is to be discussed after that.

Azerbaijan cannot agree with this approach since it will not speed up the peace process, Aliyev said. As for the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, it was stressed at the meeting that it could be discussed only after all the occupied territories of the republic were liberated. "At the same time, Azerbaijan guarantees safety to the Armenian population in the region," Aliyev reiterated yet again. He said these issues could and should be resolved as soon as this year in the interests of the two peoples. After the consultations in Baku the Turkish diplomat is to visit Yerevan.

Georgia

Georgia: EU Requested To Mediate Abkhazian Conflict

LD0902095296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0937 GMT 9 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Dmitriy Polunin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ROME, February 9 (Itar-Tass) — Georgia has applied to the European Union (EU) in a request for assistance in settling the Georgian-Abkhazian crisis, as well as other conflicts that have flared up due to separatism in the Caucasian region.

The request is contained in a letter which Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze sent to Susanna Agnelli as representative of the country which now presides over the EU governing bodies, sources in the Georgian embassy told Itar-Tass here on Friday.

The international community's mediatory mission is called upon to support the initiative, which was proposed at the January CIS summit with a view to settling the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict. The involvement of the EU in this initiative will help direct negotiations towards a political settlement of the conflict and avoid a further aggravation of the situation, the letter said.

Georgia: Abkhazian Leader Continues Consultations in Moscow

LD0802234396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2247 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb 8 (Interfax) — Abkhazian leader Vladislav Ardzinba is continuing intensive political consultations on Georgian-Abkhazian settlement in Moscow, well-informed sources told Interfax Thursday.

Ardzinba met with Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroyev and a number of faction leaders of the State Duma recently, they said.

Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov received Ardzinba for a second time Thursday. They had met first on February 3.

Ardzinba plans to meet with leader of Our Home Is Russia (NDR) Sergey Belyayev later Thursday evening. "Despite the fact that Russia is not advertising Ardzinba's stay in Moscow, intensive talks with him are under way," the sources said.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksey Bolshakov responsible for Georgian-Abkhazian settlement indirectly confirmed this information as he told Interfax Thursday that Russian-Abkhazian consultations were going on.

"Their results will be known in the near future," Bolshakov said.

Georgia: Communists Deplore CIS Decision on Abkhazia

MM0702170896 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 7 Feb 96 p 1

[Account by Nadezhda Garifullina of comment by Georgian Communist Party leader Panteleymon Giorgadze; date, place not given: "Panteleymon Giorgadze: 'Unity Must Be Achieved by Humanitarian Means'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The other day the Political Executive Committee of the Union of Communist Parties-CPSU Council adopted a "Statement on the Anti-Abkhazia Campaign Launched by Shevardnadze and the Decision of the Council of CIS Heads of State." The Political Executive Committee stated bluntly that the blockade against Abkhazia is condemning its long-suffering people to death by starvation, that these sanctions contradict elementary moral and legal norms generally accepted in the world community, and that they not only jeoparize the Abkhazian peoples' peace and security but also threaten to widen the war in the Caucasus.

This statement was fully supported by Georgia's communists. We believe that the declaration of a blockade is a violation of all humanitarian norms. It is intolerable, especially as the sanctions are directed against a people with whom we have lived together in a united state for centuries. We believe that Shevardnadze has misled the CIS heads of state. We are pleased that nonetheless two leaders showed courage by not signing this decision. We regret that the Russian leadership has supported the sanctions. Can unity in a family really be achieved by using the gun and starvation?

This does not mean that Georgia's communists are not fighting for Georgia's unity. However, in our view unity must be achieved exclusively by humanitarian means and not by saber-rattling, which is what the Georgian president is doing.

We want to live in one state with both Ajarians and Armenians, and especially with Abkhazians and Ossetians. By the way, we are talking to the Abkhazian communists and there are no differences of opinion between us. Let me recall that the CIS heads of state also instructed the CIS Council of Foreign Ministers and the CIS Council of Defense Ministers to prepare a new mandate for peacekeeping forces before 19 February 1996 which, calling a spade a spade, envisages their fulfillment of policing functions, the abolition of Abkhazian organs of state authority, and their replacement by a military commandant's office. Is this really a step toward peace and harmony?

Georgia: Abkhaz Side Protests Over Georgian Guerrillas' Activities

LD0802162696 Tbilisi IPRINDA in Russian 1240 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Zugdidi, 8 Feb — According to an agency correspondent, a quadripartite meeting was held in Gali District's village of Chuburkhini. The meeting was attended on the Georgian side by Colonel Tengiz Oshkhereli, head of the Georgian peacekeeping forces; on the Abkhaz side by Gali District administrator Ruslan Kishmaria; and on the Russian side by Gen Vasiliy Yakushev, the commander of the Russian peacekeeping troops.

Ruslan Kishmaria protested to the Georgian side in connection with the activities of Georgian guerrillas in the district.

Latvia

Latvia: Riga Reacts to Russian Admission to Council of Europe

LD0802210796 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1800 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Ministerial Committee of the Council of Europe has after a vote today adopted a resolution on the admission of Russia to the Council of Europe. Moscow was invited to become the 39th member of this organization. Latvia, like Lithuania and Estonia, supported Russia's admission to the Council of Europe, as yesterday in Vilnius the foreign ministers of the Baltic countries signed a joint protocol on this issue. The Baltic countries hope that Russia's membership of the Council of Europe will promote the observance of human rights and legislation and the development of democracy in that country. Latvia's national stance is explained by the leader of the Foreign Affairs Commission in the Saeima, deputy Indulis Berzins:

[Begin Berzins recording]] The politicians of the great powers of Europe — Germany, France, England — have given very serious consideration to this step, but anyway this is a completely new situation. On the one hand, of course, it is new opportunity to influence Russia; on the other, there's a (?twist) to it, of showing to Russia, saying: Yes, you'll be in it, if you behave differently. Whether Russia is at all able to behave differently than it does now — I don't think so. [end recording]

[passage omitted, including passage indistinct of Latvian Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs]

Lithuania

Lithuania: Parliament Votes To Dismiss Prime Minister

LD0802135496 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1300 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our colleague, reporter Algirdas Usas has just come into our studio to say that the Seimas has just made a decision on Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius.

In an open ballot, 94 members of the Seimas voted in favor of his dismissal, 26 members voted against, and four members abstained.

Lithuania: Parliament Votes Down Government in Censure Motion

AU0802143096 Paris AFP in English 1356 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, Feb 8 (AFP) — The Lithuanian parliament on Thursday voted down the government in a censure motion against Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius, who has been implicated in a banking scandal.

Lithuania: President Appoints Acting Prime Minister

LD0802150096 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1430 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the dismissal of Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius on 8 February, Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas appointed Laurynas Mindaugas Stankevicius, minister of administrative reforms and municipal affairs, as acting prime minister. Brazauskas made this announcement at a news conference broadcast live on Lithuanian radio on 8 February.

The president also said that he accepts the formal resignation of the cabinet of ministers, which followed the dismissal of the prime minister, and instructed the ministers to continue with their duties until a new government is appointed.

Lithuania: President, Prime Minister on Dismissal

LD0802150296 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Seimas today began to discuss a draft resolution approving the dismissal of the prime minister. The draft resolution was presented to the Seimas by President Algirdas Brazauskas. On 29 January 1996, the president signed an edict which proposed that the Seimas should approve relieving Adolfas Slezevicius from his duties. The president presented the draft resolution to this effect from the rostrum of the Seimas today. President Algirdas Brazauskas:

[Begin Brazauskas recording] Why did it happen? One of the reasons is this: although it concerns the prime minister, it is not a problem of the state, which some people tried to describe as a state disaster or a political crisis, or described it with other big words. I totally disagree with that. Work is continuing as usual in the state, and I believe that what I would call the personal problem of Adolfas Slezevicius should not be related to the general situation in Lithuania at all.

However, I cannot deny that it is not all that easy and simple in our country today or that we do not have many problems and matters which should be dealt with very urgently. Certainly, we should start with the banking problems.

During its three years in office, the government has done a considerable amount of work indeed, although it was criticized and a vote of no confidence was initiated, the government provided explanations to the Seimas, and so did the prime minister. No one can deny that in such an economic, social, and political situation as the one that Lithuania faces now, decisions that are made are sometimes very painful, there is a great deal of responsibility involved and these decisions are not always very precise because, as you will agree, there are many thing which we do not know about governing our country. True, we have learned a lot, but unfortunately, life has to make its corrections, and, strange as it is, we have to learn from our own mistakes.

The three years of the government's work were not in vain and I would like to say thank you for this work.

The government still has one year to work [before the general elections scheduled in October 1996]. I would like the general composition of the cabinet to remain unchanged — certainly, subject to the outcome of [today's] voting.

I would like to remind you that I proposed that Prime Minister Slezevicius should resign, and there was a number of reasons for this. One of the reasons was that the problem, which has been going on for a month now, could have been solved in a way which I thought was peaceful, democratic, and decisive. However, the resignation failed to materialize. The resignation could have given us an opportunity to calm the general public, the political parties, and certain politicians and to start forming a new government in a serious and rapid manner so that it could begin dealing with a large number of pending tasks.

However, my message failed to get through. Prime Minister Slezevicius did not take my advice. Unfortunately, the parliamentary faction and the leadership of the [Lithuanian] Democratic Labor Party [LDDP] failed to appreciate my proposal, either, and that is why today we are all in this hall to debate the edict [on the dismissal of the prime minister] which I signed.

I would like to note once again that I do not want to link the personal problem of Adolfas Slezevicius, which is now under discussion, with the work of the entire cabinet. [passage omitted]

The main reason [for the proposal to relieve Slezevicius from his duties] was the withdrawal of the bank deposit by Adolfas Slezevicius [from the Lithuanian Joint-Stock Innovation Bank two days before the bank was declared insolvent]. He is a state official, and I do not believe that such behaviour can be tolerated. [end recording]

Answering a question from Kestutis Skrebys, an opposition member of parliament, about whether the situation could be solved by early elections, President Algirdas Brazauskas said:

[Begin Brazauskas recording] I repeat: I do not see that there is a political crisis, or any other kind of crisis, in the country. Therefore I am positive that no early elections to the Seimas are needed. It would be the wrong time [to hold early elections]; it would create political confusion at the time when intensive work is needed. In addition, if we look at the procedures that are required to prepare for elections, we can see that early elections can take place only several months, maybe three months, before the date which is scheduled in accordance with the constitution. [end recording]

Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius wanted to present a four-hour-long report. However, the Seimas speaker did not agree with that. In a speech which lasted for just 20 minutes, the prime minister noted that the number of attacks on him and on the state [as heard] increased in the middle of 1995 when the economic situation in Lithuania improved. He also recalled the economic indices of 1992, which exceeded only the figures for Georgia and Armenia. This was the legacy which the present government received at that time [Slezevicius said].

Then Slezevicius spoke about banking problems which overshadowed the successful economic indices of 1995.

Speaking about the draft resolution to approve the the dismissal of the prime minister, Adolfas Slezevicius said:

[Begin Slezevicius recording] The process of dismissal of the prime minister and, consequently, of the entire cabinet, which started today, is an integral part of the activities of the opposition. It is the third attempt to dismiss the government. This time, it is approved by the president and by some members of the majority who united with the opposition.

All kinds of pressure were applied to me to make me resign. A criminal case was instituted very actively for this purpose. I believe that in order to justify the dismissal of the prime minister, there will be attempts to push this case through to the courts, employing various methods.

However, I fully understand the responsibility of the party in power to implement the promises made to the people of Lithuania, especially in solving the banking and social problems, and therefore I, as chairman of the party, cannot abandon things as they are because I am confident that a change of government at this time, when the state has so many problems and when there is so little time left until the new elections to the Seimas, is not a method from which the interests of the state and its people can benefit. In addition, neither the

[new] chairman of the Bank of Lithuania nor the [new] minister of the interior have yet been appointed.

I would not like to overrate my personal role, but I want to say that all the people who are escalating this crisis will have to assume full responsibility for the further successful political, economic, and social development of our country.

In the speech by His Excellency the President today, I failed to hear genuine reasons for my dismissal. I do not understand why the president's opinion changed so significantly in the period from 7 January to 20 January. On 7 January, at a meeting of the LDDP parliamentary faction, which was attended by the president, a decision was made not to change the government, and this opinion was supported [by the president]. I do not understand the rapid change of position by some LDDP faction members, either. This change took place after the LDDP faction meeting on 7 January. I do not understand why the resignation of Interior Minister Romasis Vaitiekunas was so persistently demanded, and why he was not allowed to act as minister until a new minister is appointed. I do not understand why there was such a rush: the minister would be dismissed automatically when the prime minister is dismissed.

I do sincerely respect His Excellency Algirdas Brazauskas, but I have to confess that I do not fully understand the scheming which is presently being done by the people who are close to him; I do not understand what is going on there [in the president's office] in general.

The unstable situation in the country is highly beneficial to the debtors of the [troubled] banks, the lending institutions, those who misuse people's deposits, and the business people who avoid paying taxes to the budget. I think that the results of the unstable situation could be much worse than what is described as my moral and political mistake [of withdrawing the deposit before the bank's collapse].

I understand that I made a mistake, and I again apologize to his excellency the president of the Republic of Lithuania, to all the people of Lithuania, to my colleagues in the Cabinet, to my friends in the party and its parliamentary faction. I view this mistake as a mere pretext for my dismissal.

My dismissal from the post of prime minister would not be a personal tragedy for me. I did not accumulate any wealth while in this post. I worked honestly, and worked as well as I could. I am looking at events in a sober way: I understand the people who cannot give up their principles, but I cannot give up mine, either.

I believe in my motherland, Lithuania. I believe in the wisdom of our people. I believe that the present hardships (?will be overcome). I wish new government and the new majority in the Seimas every success in continuing the work that we started. [end recording]

Both the president and the prime minister answered questions from the members of the Seimas. Discussions started at noon. More than 20 members of parliament expressed their wish to take part in the discussions, so the voting will only take place during the evening session.

Lithuania: Parliamentary Opposition on Cabinet Formation

LD0902115096 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Representatives of some Seimas [parliament] factions voiced their views on the formation of the government at a news conference held at the Lithuanian Seimas today. Here is Guoda Salciute reporting from the Seimas radio studio.

[Salciute] The resignation of the prime minister does not change the balance of political forces [in the parliament], Algirdas Saudargas, leader of the Lithuanian Christian Democrats Party (LKDP), told journalists at a news conference today. The government continues to be the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party government. The LKDP, while remaining in the opposition, advocates the immediate formation of a government which could start work as soon as possible.

At the same time Algirdas Saudargas stressed that the LKDP would demand more openness from the new government because the former government failed to present full information about the situation in the country.

Another representative from the LKDP, Ceslovas Stankevicius, stressed that any delay in the formation of the cabinet would be dangerous because much time has already been wasted, a month of destructive debates in solving the removal of a compromised official. Now it is necessary to pursue a policy which corresponds to the interests of the state. While remaining in opposition and having no plans of joining the new cabinet, the LKDP will continue to work in the Lithuanian Seimas concentrating on state affairs.

The principles of the party's activity are as follows: to treasure each day while being engaged in a constructive activity, to bring the Lithuanian banking system up to European standards, to refrain from proposing the 'unpegging' of the Lithuanian currency unit litas from the U.S. dollar until the Lithuanian credit and finance system has been restored.

The LKDP believes that the functions which had been taken over by the government should be gradually returned to the Bank of Lithuania.

At another press conference Romualdas Ozolas, chairman of the Lithuanian Centre Union (LCS), described the forced resignation of the prime minister as the first great lesson of democracy. Our democratic order has been reinforced, the constitutional activity has become more efficient and the officials will have to think of their political impeccability, he said.

At the same time he expressed hope that a breakthrough in the fight against corruption may also take place. Speaking about the formation of a new cabinet of ministers, Romualdas Ozolas said that the president's actions were causing him concern. If the president continues the policy of the former Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP) government while approving the former government's programme regardless of how much improved it may be, the LCS would not cooperate with the government and would not be able to take part in it.

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 352
MERRIFIELD, VA.

This is a U.S. Government publication produced by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Its contents in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

FBIS collects, translates, disseminates, and analyzes foreign open-source information on behalf of the U.S. Government. Its publications may contain copyrighted material. ***Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.***

— Bracketed indicators before the first sentence of each item describe the way in which the material was processed by FBIS.

— Headlines and all bracketed explanatory notes are supplied by FBIS.

— Personal and place names are rendered in accordance with the decisions of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names as adapted by FBIS. Unverified names in radio and television material appear in parentheses and are spelled phonetically; words and phrases in parentheses preceded by a question mark are unclear in the original and deduced from context.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

U.S. Government Customers

For a list of FBIS products, to subscribe to an FBIS publication, or to indicate a change of address contact:

FBIS
P.O. Box 2604
Washington, DC 20013-2604
Telephone: (202) 338-6735
FAX: (703) 733-6042

Non-Government Customers

Subscriptions are available from the National Technical Information Service:

NTIS
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161
Telephone: (703) 487-4630
FAX: (703) 321-8547

New subscribers should expect a 30-day delay in receipt of the first issue.